

ORDER IN THE CLASSROOM

Violence, Discipline, and Student Achievement



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PREFACE

The American public is well acquainted with the national need to ensure the personal safety of the students and teachers in our schools, as well as the need to control the rising tide of youth violence in our neighborhoods. In this report, however, we address the problem of school discipline from a less familiar perspective — the critical role that school order and discipline play in the ability of our teachers to teach and our students to learn. How much do school order and discipline matter? How much have they changed? What is being done in response? These are the issues we focus on in this report.

While all three authors participated in the conception, design, and review of the report, each had primary responsibility for a section. Harold Wenglinsky carried out the analyses that are described in the first section of the report,

“The Links among School Discipline, Delinquency, and Achievement;” Richard Coley wrote the section, “School Disorder: Levels and Trends;” and Paul Barton was the author of the final section, “Recent Developments in Policy and Practice.” In addition, Coley created the report’s graphics and managed the report’s editorial production.

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While any errors of fact or interpretation are those of the authors, the report benefited from the reviews of several people. At ETS, the report was reviewed by Howard Wainer. In addition, the report was reviewed by Mary Frase of NCES, Bella Rosenberg of the American Federation of Teachers, and Jackson Toby of Rutgers University. Kirsty Brown was the editor, Carla Cooper designed the cover and provided desktop publishing, and Jim Chewning coordinated production.

SUMMARY AND HIGHLIGHTS

Recent tragic events have riveted public attention to the behavior of students in the nation's schools. As the nation focuses on improving the academic achievement of its students, we need to remember the caution given by the late Al Shanker, former president of the American Federation of Teachers, "Unless you have order and civility, not much learning will go on."

This report confirms the link between order in the classroom and academic achievement, examines the current level of school discipline problems, and describes a sampling of approaches being used across the country to reduce violence and increase order and discipline in our schools.

THE LINKS AMONG SCHOOL DISCIPLINE, DELINQUENCY, AND ACHIEVEMENT

This section of the report reviews prior research and discusses an original analysis on the impact of school disciplinary policies on order in the classroom and student academic performance. Prior research in this area found that disciplinary

policies played an important role in reducing student misbehavior, but could not identify the most effective type of disciplinary policy, nor link student misbehavior to academic achievement. This report uses the National Educational Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88) to measure the relationships among disciplinary policies, student delinquency, and academic achievement. Findings include the following:

- Delinquency can be classified as one of three types: drug and alcohol use, nonserious offenses such as being late for class, and serious offenses meriting severe punishments.
- The severity of the punishments schools mete out to students affects all types of delinquency. The more severe the punishments, the lower the prevalence of the offenses.
- The security arrangements of the school affect nonserious offenses. The more strictly schools monitor the movements of their students during the school

day, the less often the students will be tardy or absent.

- The existence of policies on school uniforms or gangs is not significantly related to any of the types of delinquency.
- The frequency of serious and nonserious offenses is negatively related to academic achievement in all four subject areas studied — mathematics, reading, science, and social science.
- The frequency of drug offenses is negatively related to academic achievement in mathematics and science, but not in social science and reading.

SCHOOL DISORDER: LEVELS AND TRENDS

This section of the report presents data from a variety of sources to portray the current condition of the nation's classrooms (and the trends, where available) regarding school discipline problems. Where available, data are provided for different groups of students or schools, as well as for states. Findings include:

- About one eighth-grader in 10 feels unsafe at school. Hispanic students are more likely than Black and White students to feel unsafe.
- More than half of the nation's public schools reported that a crime had been committed on the premises and reported to police.
- One in 10 schools reported that a serious violent crime such as rape or sexual battery, suicide, robbery, or physical attacks with a weapon had occurred at the school.
- City schools, large schools, and schools with the highest proportions of minority students were the most likely to report crimes (and serious violent crimes).
- Thirteen percent of the nation's eighth-graders attended schools where physical conflicts were a moderate or serious problem.
- High school principals reported that the three most serious problems were student tardiness, absenteeism and class-cutting, and tobacco use.

- More than one-third of the nation's high school principals reported that student drug and alcohol use was a serious or moderate problem.
- Between 1991 and 1997 problems with student tardiness, absenteeism, class-cutting, drug use, drug sales on school grounds, and verbal abuse of teachers increased. Problems with student alcohol use decreased.
- About 15 percent of students reported being victimized at school. Four percent reported being violently victimized, an increase over 1989.
- More than one-quarter of students reported the presence of street gangs in their schools, nearly double the rate of 1989. Hispanic students were more likely than Black and White students to report the presence of gangs in their schools.
- Thirteen percent of U.S. students reported knowing another student who had brought a gun to school. While less than one-half of 1 percent of students said they actually had brought a gun to

school, about 5 percent reported seeing a student at their school with a gun.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN POLICY AND PRACTICE

This section of the report describes a wide variety of approaches to reducing violence and increasing order and discipline. In some cases it provides examples, and where the data are available, it provides statistics on the prevalence of programs and practices.

- *Federal Action.* In 1994, the Gun-Free Schools Act required that states automatically expel weapon-toting students for at least a year.
- *Statewide Efforts.* Recent examples of statewide actions are the West Virginia Productive and Safe Schools Act of 1995, creating a zero-tolerance for guns, violence, and drugs. Also in 1995, Texas passed the Safe Schools Act, requiring schools and districts

to develop codes of conduct and spell out the penalties for violation.

- *Codes of Behavior.* While some states have new statewide laws, individual school districts may also issue codes of behavior. The report describes one exemplary effort in Cincinnati. There are also noteworthy programs in Toledo and Oklahoma City.
- *Collective Bargaining Contracts.* Generally, collective bargaining contracts between teachers and school systems make some mention of how teachers can deal with discipline problems. As discipline problems have increased, more such contracts have attempted to deal with them. As an example, the report describes the contract language of the Minneapolis Federation of Teachers #0059.
- *Character Education.* An emphasis on character building in the schools goes back to the beginning of American history. A revival of interest has been underway since the 1980s. Some educators believe that if students internalize the right values, they will become responsible citizens in the school, as well as in the community. The report describes a key development emerging from the 1992 Aspen Conference on Character Education, and the *Character Counts!*[™] approach.
- *Better Education, Better Discipline.* One theory suggests that when students are faced with unchallenging subject matter they will become bored, and search for other outlets for their energies. The report describes a number of efforts, such as the Accelerated Schools Project and the Coalition of Essential Schools, from the perspective of encouraging reductions in school discipline problems.
- *School Uniforms.* While there has been a growing interest in requiring school uniforms as a way of controlling behavior problems, only three percent of public schools required

them in 1996-97, and a third of those that did instituted the requirement in that year. There is evidence of increased national consideration of requiring school uniforms.

- *Alternative Schooling.* With new and tougher policies being put into place, schools must have an alternative place for students removed from regular classrooms. Systems sometimes create a whole alternative school or alternative classrooms within a regular school.
- *Conflict Resolution.* Efforts to teach students strategies for resolving conflicts have been underway since the early 1980s. The degree of such efforts vary. The state of Illinois now *requires* districts to provide violence prevention education for fourth- to twelfth-grade students. Other examples are also provided.

- *The Prevalence of School-Level Security Measures in 1996-97.* A Department of Education survey provides information on the prevalence of various security measures. Over half of schools control access to school buildings, and one-fourth to school grounds. Metal detectors are used routinely in only 1 percent of schools, and randomly in another 4 percent. Two percent of schools are considered to have “stringent” security measures, 11 percent “moderate” measures, and the rest to have low security.

CONCLUSION

The data show that school discipline is everybody’s problem. Schools from east to west; north to south; schools in cities, suburbs, and rural areas; and schools serving students from all racial/ethnic background — all experience problems with student behavior.

Moreover, these problems are more than a security and safety problem — they are critical factors in student academic achievement. Without order in our classrooms, teachers can’t teach and students can’t learn.

On a more positive note, some things that schools have traditionally done seem to help. Evoking student disciplinary policies, for example, was found to be related to lower levels of student misbehavior. Controlling students’ movements during the school day also seems to reduce the levels of “nonserious” school offenses.

Many innovative practices are now being tried in our schools and some of them are likely to help. But we need more empirical evidence to gauge their effectiveness. Only with new data will it be possible to supplement existing policies with more preventive measures that are likely to be effective.

INTRODUCTION

Americans, particularly parents and teachers, are very aware of school violence. The issue of safety is only as far away as the TV screen. Violence comes screaming from the screen with pictures of children on stretchers being carted to ambulances. The concern about safety is revived regularly, with every new school shooting.

These events, fortunately, are relatively rare, for all the trauma they cause. They serve to maintain a public perception that a central education problem is “safe schools,” and corrective responses are framed sometimes as legislation, for example, “The Safe Schools Act.”

But less serious forms of student misbehavior can occur as regularly as the school bell rings and buzzers signal the end of a class period. Now the routine nature of school disorder is not only an issue of student safety, but also a critical matter of student learning. For, as Al Shanker, former president of the American Federation of Teachers, said, “Unless you have order and civility, not much learning will go on.”

Discussions of education reform have been about higher standards and more (and better) tests. They have included debates over alternatives to public education such as “choice” and vouchers. More recently, as the baby boom echo has increased enrollments, the focus of many reform efforts has been about reducing class size.

The concern about discipline has been on a separate track in the public arena. But it is central to the issues of raising student achievement, meeting national education goals, and improving U.S. achievement in international assessments, such as the Third International Mathematics and Science Study.

Section one of this report presents the results of some original research. It deals with two sets of questions. The first concerns what kinds of policies affect student behavior. Do strong measures get results? The second is whether problem behaviors actually reduce achievement. That is a matter not heretofore established with hard facts.

Section two presents the data on the incidence of various forms of breakdown in discipline and order, including information on trends over approximately the last decade. It answers the questions: How much disorder — and of what kinds?

The third section describes several of the many different approaches that are emerging for improving order and discipline, from new federal and state laws to school uniforms.

These findings, and the data presented here, support placing the issue of classroom order front and center in school reform efforts to enhance student performance.

THE LINKS AMONG SCHOOL DISCIPLINE, STUDENT DELINQUENCY AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, numerous policy proposals have emerged to deal with the problem of disorder in America's schools. While the delinquent behavior of students has been a concern for many years, it received particular attention with the development of the National Education Goals. In response, policymakers have proposed various and sundry reforms, including requiring students to wear uniforms, showing "zero tolerance" to gangs, putting students in small schools or schools within schools, hiring more security guards, and supporting efforts to prevent school violence before it occurs.

These policies make certain empirical assumptions about the causes and consequences of student delinquency. The National Education Goals, in relating a disciplined environment to student learning, assume that school disorder is a major obstacle to academic achievement. The various policies also

assume that the primary benefit of reducing disorder is improving student achievement. Moreover, these policies assume that their own effect will be to reduce disorder. For instance, the idea behind requiring school uniforms is that students wearing uniforms will be less likely to engage in gang behavior (which involves wearing colors) and the overall environment will appear more disciplined and orderly. These changes, in turn, will result in students learning more.

Unfortunately, the research base for testing these assumptions is weak. Most support for innovative school discipline policies comes from anecdotal evidence or small-scale evaluations of individual schools or school districts. Little national research has been conducted, largely due to the lack of national data on schools, student delinquency and academic achievement.

This study fills this gap to some degree by analyzing the National Educational Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88). The study compares the delinquency and

achievement levels of students in schools that employ a variety of disciplinary policies, from zero tolerance of gang activity to restricting student movements during the school day. It shows two factors that reduce school violence are enforcing a severe set of punishments for students who violate school rules and using a set of security procedures that limit student movements during the school day.

Before coming to this finding, however, the following section reviews what can be determined from previous research on school disorder and explains how this study builds upon the earlier work.

PRIOR RESEARCH

The first and only major data collection effort geared toward the study of school disorder was the Safe School Study of 1978, which was undertaken by the National Institute of Education in what was then the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. It was developed in response to a request by Congress to measure the extent of

school disorder and find evidence of policies that might reduce it.¹ The study surveyed over 4,000 schools, with a more detailed questionnaire going to 642 of these schools. Principals, teachers, and students participated in the survey.

The data revealed that the problem of school disorder was extensive, even though the study was conducted 10 years before the peak of the “crime wave” in the late 1980s.

About 8 percent of all schools were found to have a serious problem with crime, with the problem being more pronounced in secondary than in elementary school. In a given month, 11 percent of all students reported having something stolen, 1.3 percent of all students reported being physically assaulted, and 12 percent of all teachers reported having something stolen, 5 percent of these thefts occurring by way of force, weapons, or threats. One-quarter of all schools suffered from vandalism in a given month, and one-tenth reported property stolen. The

study also attempted to relate various characteristics of schools to disorder, but these analyses suffered from such significant methodological flaws that they have been widely disregarded.

A follow-up study did attempt to analyze the Safe Schools Study data to assess the effectiveness of different school policies. Gottfredson and Gottfredson used multivariate statistical techniques to relate levels of student and teacher victimization to school size, school resources, principal-teacher relations, the demographic characteristics of the school, and the crime levels and other characteristics of the surrounding community, for the subgroup of 642 schools for which more detailed information was collected.²

The study found that the strongest predictor of school crime was the nature of the surrounding community. Communities with high levels of poverty and crime tended to have schools with high levels of crime.

The study also found that school size played a role, with larger schools evincing higher levels of victimization. Finally, the study found that clear and consistent disciplinary policies, particularly those perceived as being fair by students and teachers, were associated with lower levels of victimization.

The results of these two studies must be understood in the context of their methodological limitations.

First, the data did not include information on academic achievement; tests were not administered because it was thought that such tests would reduce the response rate too much. It was therefore not possible to determine how school disorder affects student learning.

Second, the data were cross-sectional, meaning that schools were surveyed at a single point in time rather than being followed over many years. This made it difficult to draw conclusions about how school characteristics *affected* delinquency. Since the two pieces of information were collected at the same time, it may be

that the degree of delinquency in the school affected many other aspects of the school, such as its policies and demographics.

Third, Gottfredson and Gottfredson did not include detailed information about disciplinary policies. They included the fairness, clarity, and consistency of such policies, which was found to be an important factor in school crime. They did not, however, assess the severity of school disciplinary policies or the use of specific policies such as zero tolerance of gangs. As a result, they had to limit their policy recommendations on discipline to reporting that disciplinary policies were important, without knowing which ones would be successful.

Other studies of schools and delinquency dealt with school policies only tangentially. The criminological literature includes numerous studies of the causes of student delinquency, but these tend not to include the school as a factor, instead studying the role of economic

¹ National Institute of Education, *Violent Schools -- Safe Schools: The Safe School Study Report to Congress*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1978.

² G.D. Gottfredson and D.C. Gottfredson, *Victimization in Schools*, New York: Plenum Press, 1985.

opportunities, community characteristics, and social norms.³ The few of these that did incorporate schooling into their models tended to treat it as an institution that could only reinforce, not reduce, delinquency.

Albert Cohen, for instance, studied students in delinquent subcultures, and found that they regarded school as a frustrating experience.⁴ He argued that the tendency of working class students to perform poorly in school, and the gap between their values and the middle class values of schools, alienated them from the educational experience, pushing them into a culture of delinquency.

Research on tracking, the placement of students in sequences of classes with varying levels of academic challenge and quality, suggested that students in lower tracks, because

they were labeled as low-performing students, would be more likely to engage in delinquency than students in higher tracks.⁵

These kinds of studies, while tacitly indicting schools for their role in reinforcing criminal behavior, do not provide much guidance to policymakers in reducing school violence because the studies point to factors at work in nearly all schools; the only policy action that could be taken in response to these studies would be to eliminate schooling entirely or exclude from schools students deemed to be at risk of delinquency.⁶

The current study, however, like the School Safety Study, examines differences in policies among schools, to determine which policies might be most conducive to reducing school violence, and addresses some of the shortcomings of that earlier study.

HOW THE STUDY WAS CONDUCTED

This study sought to measure the relationships among school disciplinary policies, student delinquency, and academic achievement. To do so, a model of how disciplinary policies might have an effect was posited.

Schools could be expected to vary in their disciplinary policies in many ways, and those of policy significance were chosen for study. It was expected that school uniforms, zero tolerance of gangs, security arrangements in the school, the severity of school punishments, and the size of the school might all affect the levels of delinquency in the school.

Delinquency levels were then expected to affect student achievement in various subject areas. To permit the inference that school policies affected

delinquency and achievement rather than the other way around, it was necessary to measure policies at an early point in time and measure delinquency and achievement at a later point in time. It was also necessary to take into account the possibility that earlier delinquency and achievement levels might account for later levels, by using earlier measures of discipline and achievement as well. Demographic characteristics of the students were also taken into account, as these might affect both the disciplinary policies and the outcomes. For instance, if poor students both evoke strict disciplinary policies and are more likely to engage in delinquency, if researchers don't know how many poor students there are in the school, they might falsely conclude that strict discipline increases delinquency.

Fortunately, NELS:88 contains all of these data

³ For a discussion, see R. Lawrence, *School Crime and Juvenile Justice*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

⁴ A.K. Cohen, *Delinquent Boys: The Culture of the Gang*, New York: Free Press, 1955.

⁵ K. Polk, "Curriculum Tracking and Delinquency: Some Observations," *American Sociological Review*, 47, 282-284, 1982; D.M. Kelly, "How the School and Teachers Create Deviants," *Contemporary Education*, 48 (4), 202-205, 1977; and P.M. Jenkins, "School Delinquency and School Commitment," *Sociology of Education*, 68 (3), 221-239, 1995.

⁶ There is also some doubt as to the correctness of these findings. See M.D. Wiatrowski, S. Hansell, and D.C. Wilson, "Curriculum Tracking and Delinquency," *American Sociological Review*, 47, 151-160, 1982.

for a nationally representative sample of 25,000 eighth-graders in 1988.⁷ It resurveyed these students in 1990, when most were in tenth grade and again in 1992, when most were in twelfth grade. The information collected for the students included self-reported delinquency in the tenth and twelfth grades, making it possible to examine both delinquency as an outcome and prior delinquency.

Students were also tested in mathematics, reading, science, and social science, in all three surveys, making it possible to use achievement as an outcome (in the twelfth grade) and as a prior measure (in the eighth grade). Students were asked about their demographic characteristics, making it possible to take these into account in the analysis.

Teachers and principals were also surveyed. From their responses it was possible to learn about disciplinary policies

and school size when the sample of students was largely in tenth grade. It was thus possible, using NELS:88, to measure the relationship between tenth-grade school policies and twelfth-grade delinquency and achievement, taking into account delinquency in tenth grade, achievement in eighth grade, and demographic characteristics such as ethnicity, gender, and SES.

Not all of the 25,000 students surveyed could be included in the analysis. Some were excluded because they had not participated in all three surveys of the study. Some of these excluded students had dropped out of school; others were excluded because they had switched schools between tenth and twelfth grades. For these students, it is difficult to attribute the effects of schools to their tenth-grade school on their twelfth-grade school. These exclusions resulted in a sample of 13,626 students.

For the analysis, measures were taken from NELS:88 to indicate school policies, student

delinquency, student achievement, and student demographics. Policies were selected based upon their relevance to the current national policy proposals. Thus, school uniforms, zero tolerance of gangs, security measures, the severity of punishment, and school size were measured.

Delinquency was measured for the tenth- and twelfth-graders from self-reports of various acts of misbehavior. For tenth-graders, the degree of delinquency was measured by adding these responses together into a single sum; for twelfth-graders, these responses were divided into different forms of delinquency using the statistical technique of factor analysis.

Achievement was measured as growth in achievement from eighth to twelfth grade, to take into account the prior measure; for each subject area, the eighth-grade score was subtracted from the twelfth-grade score. Demographics were measured from student self-reports

in eighth grade; the measures used were ethnicity, gender, and SES.

The measures were then combined in a series of multivariate models, models in which all characteristics seen as affecting an outcome are taken into account. Thus the effect of school discipline on student delinquency in a multivariate model refers to the effect for students of similar demographics and prior levels of delinquency.

First, multivariate models were developed in which school discipline was related to the three types of twelfth-grade delinquency. Then, the three types of delinquency were related to the four types of achievement. All analyses took into account ethnicity, gender, SES, and prior delinquency (see Appendix A for technical details of study).

⁷ National Center for Education Statistics, *Second Follow-up: Student Component Data File User's Manual*, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 1994; National Center for Education Statistics, *Second Follow-up: School Component Data File User's Manual*, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 1994; and National Center for Education Statistics, *Second Follow-up: Parent Component Data File User's Manual*, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 1994.

THE RESULTS

Before reviewing the multivariate analyses, it is worth reviewing what the NELS:88 data reveal about delinquency and disciplinary policies in the schools.⁸ Since the NELS:88 data analyzed here include only those students staying in the same school for tenth through twelfth grades, it is important to note that this group is somewhat different from the typical group of students.

The NELS:88 students analyzed here do not include dropouts, who may be more likely to engage in delinquency and evoke severe disciplinary policies than other students. Thus the percentages presented here show lower levels of delinquency and less severe disciplinary policies than might be the case generally.

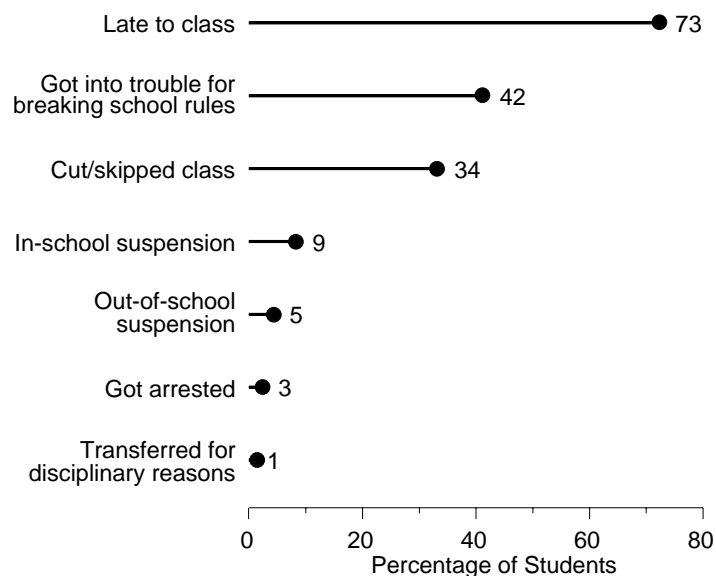
That said, the delinquent behavior of tenth-grade students seems to fall at one of two poles, as can be seen in Table 1. Certain behaviors seem to occur commonly, but be of a relatively nonserious nature. As illustrated in Figure 1, nearly three-quarters of all students

Table 1: Percentage of Tenth-Graders Reporting Delinquent Behavior

Behavior	Never occurred	Occurred 1-2 times	Occurred 3-6 times	Occurred 7-9 times	Occurred 10+ times
Late to class	27%	39%	22%	5%	6%
Cut/skipped class	66	21	7	2	3
Got into trouble for breaking school rules	58	31	8	2	2
In-school suspension	91	7	2	<1	<1
Out-of-school suspension	95	5	<1	<1	<1
Transferred for disciplinary reasons	99	<1	0	0	<1
Got Arrested	98	2	<1	0	<1

N=13,626
Source: Wenglinsky, unpublished tabulations derived from NELS:88

Figure 1: Percentage of Tenth-Graders Reporting Delinquent Behavior



Source: Wenglinsky, unpublished tabulations derived from NELS:88

⁸ While the data in the next section of the report will provide a current picture of school disorder, the data in this section of the report will provide more detailed information on the issues that will be subjected to multivariate analyses.

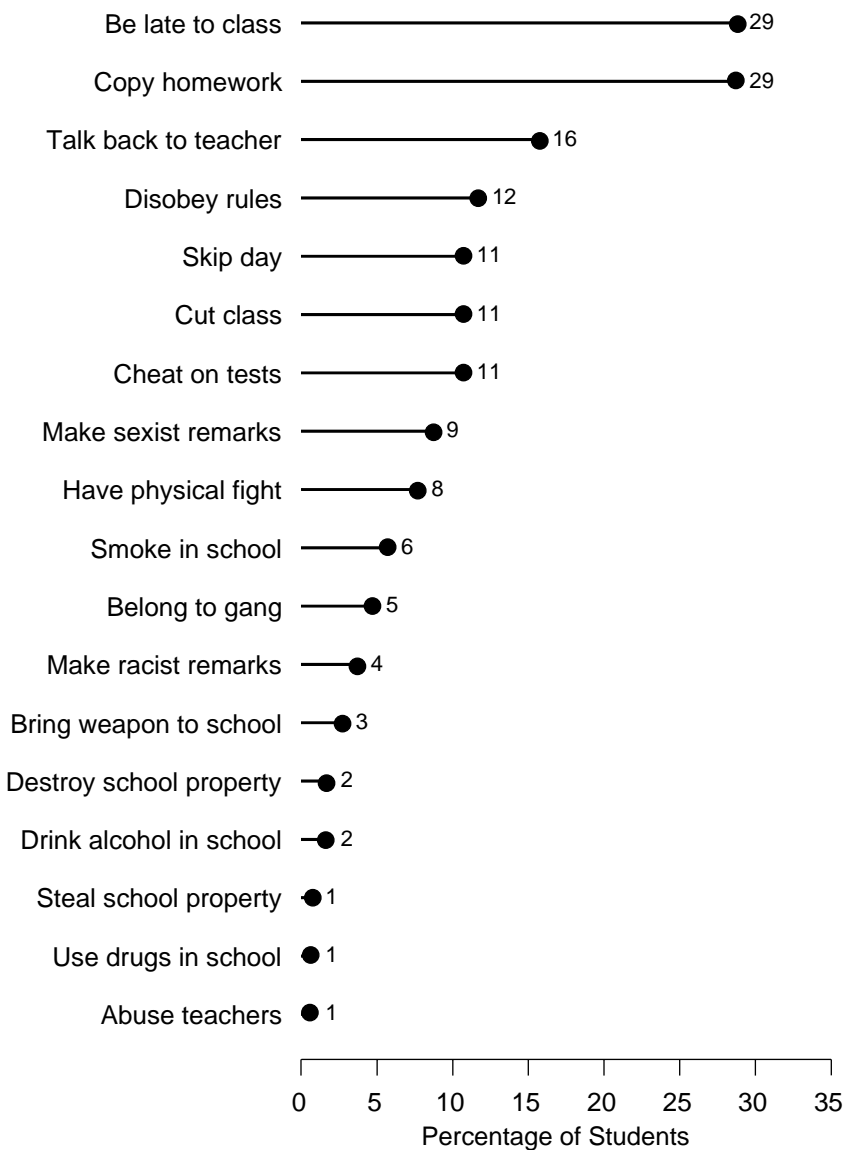
are late for class some-
times, and one in eight
is late seven or more
times. One-third of all
students reported
cutting or skipping
class, and somewhat
more than one-third
reported getting in
trouble in some way or
other. More serious
offenses seem to occur
much less frequently.
Less than one in 10
students reported an
in-school suspension,
and 5 percent or less
reported being sus-
pended out of school,
transferred for disciplin-
ary reasons, or arrested.
Thus, one set of
offenses, nonserious
ones, appears to be
common while another
set, more serious
offenses, appears to
be rare.

Student attitudes
toward delinquency are
also bipolar, as can be
seen in Table 2. Stu-
dents were asked
whether they thought
it was “never okay,”
“rarely okay,” “some-
times okay,” or “often
okay” to engage in
certain offenses. As
summarized in Figure 2,
sizeable percentages of
tenth-graders regarded
nonserious offenses as
“sometimes” or “often”
okay. Twenty-nine
percent said that it was
okay to be late to class
or to copy homework,
16 percent said it was
okay to talk back to a
teacher, and more than

Table 2: Tenth-Graders’ Attitudes about Delinquent Behavior

Offense	Never OK	Rarely OK	Sometimes OK	Often OK
Be late to class	21%	50%	27%	2%
Copy homework	33	39	22	7
Cut/skip class	62	27	10	1
Talk back to teachers	49	35	13	3
Disobey rules	55	33	9	2
Skip day	60	29	10	1
Cheat on tests	66	23	8	3
Have physical fight	70	22	7	1
Make sexist remarks	76	16	6	3
Smoke in school	88	5	3	4
Make racist remarks	85	10	3	2
Belong to gang	89	6	3	2
Bring weapons to school	92	5	2	1
Destroy school property	93	6	1	1
Drink alcohol in school	94	4	1	1
Steal school property	96	3	1	<1
Use drugs in school	97	2	1	<1
Abuse teachers	98	2	1	1
N=13,626 Source: Wenglinsky, unpublished tabulations derived from NELS:88				

Figure 2: Percentage of Tenth-Graders Who Say That It Is “Sometimes” or “Often” Okay to Perform Various Delinquent Behaviors



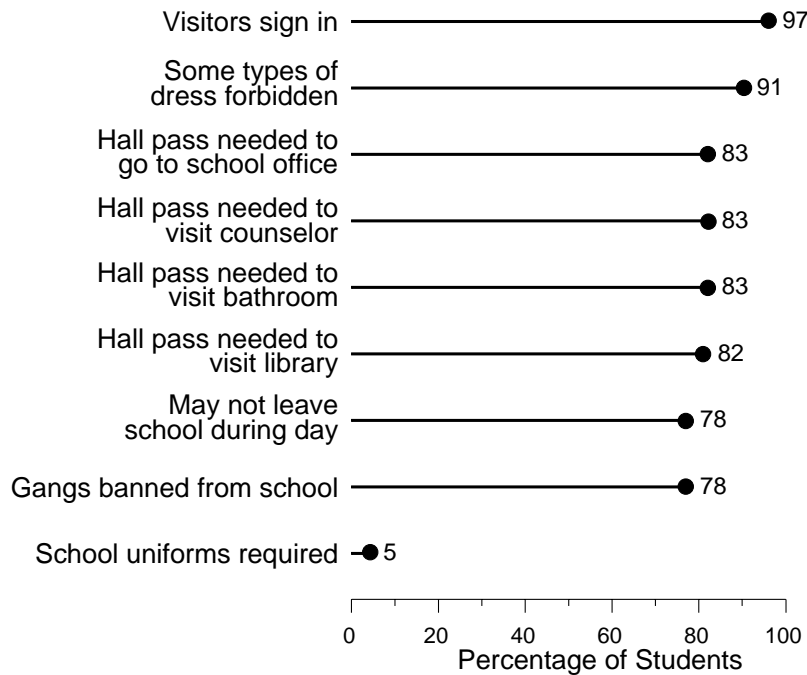
Source: Wenglinsky, unpublished tabulations derived from NELS:88

10 percent said it was okay to disobey rules, skip a day of school, cut class, and cheat on tests. On the other hand, small percentages of students said it was okay to perform more serious offenses like bring a weapon to school, destroy or steal school property, drink alcohol or use drugs in school, and abuse teachers.

The response of administrators to these offenses also appears to be bipolar. Security measures are fairly uniform across schools as shown in Figure 3. Ninety-seven percent of all surveyed students attend schools that require visitors to sign in at the door, 91 percent attend schools that forbid certain types of dress, 95 percent attend schools that do not require school uniforms, and 80 percent attend schools that require hall passes for students going to the bathroom, visiting the library, visiting a counselor, or going to a school office. Three-quarters do not let students leave the school building during the day and do not permit gang membership.

Punishments tend to vary depending upon whether the offense is nonserious or serious (Table 3). Nonserious offenses appear to lead to punishments ranging

Figure 3: Percentage of Tenth-Graders Attending Schools with Various Discipline Policies and Security Rules



Source: Wenglinsky, unpublished tabulations derived from NELS:88

from detention for first offenses, to out-of-school suspension for some second offenses.

For instance, the first time a student cuts class, detention is the most common punishment (55 percent of students are in schools where this is the punishment) while the second time, out-of-school suspension is most common (for 59 percent of students).

Drug, weapon, and violent offenses, on the other hand, evoke either suspension or expulsion for the first offense and expulsion for the second offense. Injuring a teacher provokes expulsion from schools attended by 80 percent of students for the first offense, and provokes expulsion from schools attended by 92 percent

of students for the second offense. Using drugs in school provokes out-of-school suspension for the first offense in schools attended by 72 percent of students and expulsion for the second offense in schools attended by 78 percent of students. Punishments, then, are generally more severe for serious offenses and less severe for nonserious offenses.

In order to analyze student delinquency as an outcome, it is worthwhile to categorize it into different types of offense. Using the technique of factor analysis, various offenses are placed into different categories, referred to as factors. The analysis suggests that offenses can be placed into three categories as shown in Table 4. One is nonserious offenses, including student tardiness, class-cutting, and getting into trouble. Many serious offenses are included in a second category, such as offenses resulting in suspension, disciplinary transfer, or arrest. Physical fights and tardiness belong in both serious and nonserious categories. Drug offenses, although serious, form their own category, and include marijuana use, cocaine use, and binge drinking (see Appendix B for actual numbers for factor analyses).⁹

These three types of delinquency prove to be associated with various disciplinary policies and student characteristics,

⁹ The drug offenses can occur either at school or outside of school, thus this factor should not be seen as necessarily measuring crime in the school. All of the other measures involve crime in the school except for arrests, which can occur outside of school. It is assumed here that crime outside of school can serve as a proxy for crime in the school, an assumption supported by Gottfredson and Gottfredson, 1985 (see footnote 2).

Table 3: School Disciplinary Policies — Most Common Punishment

Offense	Modal Punishment	Students in Schools That Invoke This Punishment	Alcohol use in school--1st time	Out-of-school suspension	78
Cheating--1st time	Detention	79%	Alcohol use in school--2nd time	Expulsion	69
Cheating--2nd time	Out-of-school suspension	58	Drug use in school--1st time	Out-of-school suspension	72
Skippping class--1st time	Detention	55	Drug use in school--2nd time	Expulsion	78
Skippping class--2nd time	Out-of-school suspension	59	Smoking in school--1st time	In-school suspension	47
Skippping school--1st time	In-school suspension	60	Smoking in school--2nd time	Out-of-school suspension	71
Skippping school--2nd time	Out-of-school suspension	65	Verbal abuse of teachers--1st time	Out-of-school suspension	66
Injuring student--1st time	Out-of-school suspension	82	Verbal abuse of teachers--2nd time	Out-of-school suspension	65
Injuring student--2nd time	Expulsion	60	Injuring teachers--1st time	Expulsion	80
Alcohol possession--1st time	Out-of-school suspension	79	Injuring teachers--2nd time	Expulsion	92
Alcohol possession--2nd time	Expulsion	60	Theft of school property--1st time	Out-of-school suspension	75
Drug possession--1st time	Out-of-school suspension	73	Theft of school property--2nd time	Out-of-school suspension	62
Drug possession--2nd time	Expulsion	76	Class disturbance--1st time	Detention	67
Drug sale--1st time	Expulsion	72	Class disturbance--2nd time	Out-of-school suspension	68
Drug sale--2nd time	Expulsion	91	Profanity--1st time	Detention	58
Weapons possession--1st time	Expulsion	64	Profanity--2nd time	Out-of-school suspension	71
Weapons possession--2nd time	Expulsion	90			

N=13,626

Source: Wenglinsky, unpublished tabulations derived from NELS:88

but with different patterns for each offense. As shown in Table 5, drug offenses are positively associated with prior delinquency, meaning that twelfth-graders are more likely to engage in drug offenses if they engaged in offenses of any sort in tenth grade. Drug offenses are also positively associated with

being male and negatively associated with being minority, meaning that male and white students are more likely to engage in the offenses. Socioeconomic status (SES) is unrelated to drug offenses. Of the school policies, the severity of punishments is negatively associated with drug offenses, suggesting that schools

with harsher punishments have students who engage in lower levels of these offenses (see Appendix C for actual numbers).

Nonserious offenses show a different pattern. Prior delinquency and gender are again positively associated with these offenses, meaning that students who engaged in

delinquency in tenth grade and male students are more likely to engage in nonserious offenses in twelfth grade. SES is positively related to the offense, meaning that more affluent students are more likely to engage in these offenses. Minority students, however, are more likely to engage in nonserious offenses.

Table 4: Factor Analyses: Measuring Student Delinquency

Item	Drug Factor	Nonserious Factor	Serious Factor
Had 5 or more drinks in a row	X		
Used marijuana, last 12 months	X		
Used cocaine, last 12 months	X		
Got into trouble		X	
Cut/skipped class		X	
Late for school		X	X
Got into physical fight		X	X
Put on in-school suspension			X
Put on out-of-school suspension			X
Transferred for disciplinary reasons			X
Arrested			X
N=13,626 Source: Wenglinsky, unpublished tabulations derived from NELS:88			

Table 5: Relationship Between School Policies and School Delinquency

	Drug Offenses	Nonserious Offenses	Serious Offenses
School policies			
Punishment severity	-	-	-
Security		-	
School uniforms			
Gang ban		+	
School size		+	
Student characteristics			
SES		+	-
Prior delinquency	+	+	+
Minority	-	+	
Male	+	+	+
N=13,626 Source: Wenglinsky, unpublished tabulations derived from NELS:88			

The effects of school policies are also somewhat different. While punishment severity is again important, security arrangements, such as requiring hall passes and keeping students in the building during the day seem to be associated with lower levels of nonserious offenses as well. School size also plays a role — smaller schools have lower levels of serious offenses. Interestingly, zero tolerance policies toward gangs appear to be positively associated with nonserious offenses, suggesting that schools with such policies have more problems with tardiness and absenteeism than schools without them.

Serious offenses also have their own pattern. Prior delinquency and gender are related to the offense as before. SES, however, is negatively related to serious offenses, suggesting that in this case poorer students are more likely to engage in the offense. As with other offenses, punishment severity appears to be related to serious offenses, with more severe punishments associated with lower levels of serious offenses.

Given that policies can affect offense levels in these ways, it is worth knowing whether reducing offense levels translates into improvements in student learning. Table 6 shows that in 10 out of 12 cases, it does indeed appear that lower levels of student delinquency are associated with higher levels of achievement and vice versa. Serious and nonserious offenses are negatively associated with gains in achievement between eighth and twelfth grades in all four subject areas tested—mathematics, reading, social science, and science. Drug offenses are negatively associated with achievement gains in two of the four areas—mathematics and science, but not with social science and reading. Twelfth-grade offense levels, then, do seem to have consequences for achievement gains over the high school years (see Appendix D for actual numbers).

It seems that disciplinary policies are associated with student delinquent behavior, which itself is associated with academic achievement. This pattern, however, does not occur

Table 6: Relationship between Twelfth-Grade Delinquency and Academic Achievement Gains between Tenth and Twelfth Grades

Offense	Mathematics Achievement	Reading Achievement	Social Science Achievement	Science Achievement
Drugs	-			-
Nonserious	-	-	-	-
Serious	-	-	-	-
Total effect size	.146	.155	.111	.165
N=13,626 Source: Wenglinsky, unpublished tabulations derived from NELS:88				

Table 7: Between-School Comparisons: Disciplinary Policy and Delinquency

	Drugs				Nonserious Offenses				Serious Offenses			
	Urban	Non-urban	Public	Private	Urban	Non-urban	Public	Private	Urban	Non-urban	Public	Private
Punishment severity	-		-		-		-		-		-	
Security	-			-		-	-				+	
School uniforms												
Gang ban					+		+		-			+
School size					+	+	+	+				
N=13,626 Source: Wenglinsky, unpublished tabulations derived from NELS:88												

Table 8: Between-School Comparisons: Delinquency and Academic Achievement

	Math				Reading				Social Science				Science			
	Urban	Non-urban	Public	Private	Urban	Non-urban	Public	Private	Urban	Non-urban	Public	Private	Urban	Non-urban	Public	Private
Serious		-	-		-	-	-	-		-	-			-	-	
Nonserious	-	-	-			-	-		-	-	-		-	-	-	
Drugs	-			-									-		-	-
N=13,626 Source: Wenglinsky, unpublished tabulations derived from NELS:88																

in the same way for all types of schools. As Table 7 shows, the relationship between school disciplinary policy and student delinquent behavior is different for public schools, private schools, urban schools, and nonurban (suburban and rural) schools. On the one hand, punishment severity is related to all types of offenses for urban and public schools, but not for suburban and private schools. On the other hand, severity measures are related to nonserious offenses for suburban and public schools, but not for urban or private schools. The relationship between student delinquency and academic achievement is fairly widespread, however. Some form of delinquency is related to some form of achievement for all school types (Table 8). The major exception is that for private schools delinquency is related to achievement for drug offenses and serious offenses, but not nonserious offenses.

IMPLICATIONS AND CAVEATS

Some of the empirical assumptions made by policymakers in efforts to improve order in the classroom are supported by these findings. Foremost is the effectiveness of punishment and security in certain situations. Security measures seem to reduce levels of nonserious offenses. This should not be surprising, given that most of these offenses involve students not being where they should be (late for or cutting class) and that security measures limit student opportunities to misbehave by controlling their movements during the school day.

Limiting student movements does not, however, seem to have any effect on more serious offenses, such as drugs or violence, suggesting that if students are inclined to engage in these behaviors, they can evade most security measures. The school can, though, deter such offenses by invoking severe

sanctions. As the description of disciplinary policy indicated, a majority of schools have strict policies in place for serious offenses; a significant minority, however, do not. This analysis indicates that these less strict schools evince high levels of serious and drug offenses and that to reduce these levels such schools need to adopt stricter policies.

Another empirical assumption supported by this research is that the stakes in maintaining order are high. The consequence of student disorder is not merely more disorder; disorder also erodes the learning environment for all students as indicated by lower student achievement gains. Just as policymakers supposed, school order is closely tied to achievement. This finding suggests that disciplinary policy is not a side issue, distracting educators from more academic goals; rather, a sound disciplinary policy is a prerequisite for a sound academic policy.

The findings of this study, however, fail to support some of the empirical assumptions made by policymakers. The notions that school uniforms and zero tolerance for gangs would reduce school disorder and consequently improve student academic performance were not supported.

The schools in the study that required school uniforms did not have levels of delinquency significantly different from schools that did not require school uniforms, in any of the three offense categories. In the drug and serious offense categories, schools with a zero tolerance policy toward gangs did not have levels of delinquency significantly different from schools that did not have such a policy, and in the nonserious offense category, schools with the anti-gang policy had higher levels of delinquency. Finally, the notion that small schools reduce delinquency was only partially supported. Like having security

arrangements, attending smaller schools can reduce nonserious offenses, but not serious offenses or drug and alcohol use.

These implications of the study come with certain caveats that suggest the need for further research. First, these findings do not rule out the possibility that prevention efforts may also be effective. Schools around the country are experimenting with innovative techniques to prevent school violence either through psychosocial interventions or by addressing some of delinquency's root causes. (Some of these are described in the final section of this report.) These efforts are not, however, measurable from NELS:88 or any other national database. To obtain such data, it is probably necessary to initiate a national data collection effort geared toward school discipline issues, along the lines of the 1977 School Safety Study. Such an effort

could answer a lot of the questions left open by this study.

Second, because the study examines students who remain in the same schools over its four years, it does not address policies for students who drop out of school or transfer. While students who remain in school may benefit from strict disciplinary policies, those dropping out may not. A promising line of inquiry in the future would be the impact of student policies on high school retention.

Third, while this study uses multivariate techniques to assess the effectiveness of school policies while taking student demographics into account, it uses only the most basic of these techniques. The use of multilevel techniques, while unlikely to change the direction of the effects found here, could more precisely quantify them. Thus, the answer to the question of "how much" policies can be expected to affect test scores and

delinquency rates must await more sophisticated statistical analyses.¹⁰

Knowing that student misbehavior matters, and that it is subject to policy manipulation is only part of the story. Just how prevalent is school disorder, and what are policymakers trying to do about it? These are the questions posed, and to some degree, answered in the following sections of the report.

¹⁰ Other methodological caveats should also be mentioned. The study uses observational data and thus cannot be deemed an experiment. Consequently, causal inferences should be made with caution if at all. Also, the effect sizes discerned here are quite modest; the study should therefore be replicated to test the robustness of the results. Finally, regression analysis has any number of pitfalls. For a good discussion of these, see Howard Wainer, "On the Sensitivity of Regression and Regressors," *Psychological Bulletin*, 2, 267-273, 1973.

SCHOOL DISORDER: LEVELS AND TRENDS

Recent tragic events in our nation's schools have shocked the public and riveted attention on student behavior in the nation's classrooms. But how much crime actually occurs in our schools? Is the situation getting better or worse? And what kinds of schools have more problems than other kinds of schools? This section of the report pulls together data that attempt to provide answers to the following important questions:

- Are children safe at school?
- How extensive is crime in U.S. schools?
- Are there differences among different types of pupils or among the states?
- How has the scope of school discipline problems changed?
- How has student victimization changed?

Some of the data are only available for one point in time and other data are available over a span of years. For

some variables, we can examine data that compare states, and/or compare different groups of students or schools. For other data, we are limited to national estimates.¹¹

STUDENTS' FEELINGS OF SAFETY AT SCHOOL

In addition to being places of learning, schools should provide an atmosphere of security and safety for children. As part of the 1996 NAEP mathematics assessment, eighth-graders were asked how safe they felt at school. Nearly one out of 10 students indicated feeling either unsafe or very unsafe at school. These data are shown in Figure 4 for various student groupings. Statistically significant differences are indicated on the chart by the positioning of shaded areas. Only data points on opposite sides of the shaded areas are statistically significantly different from one another.

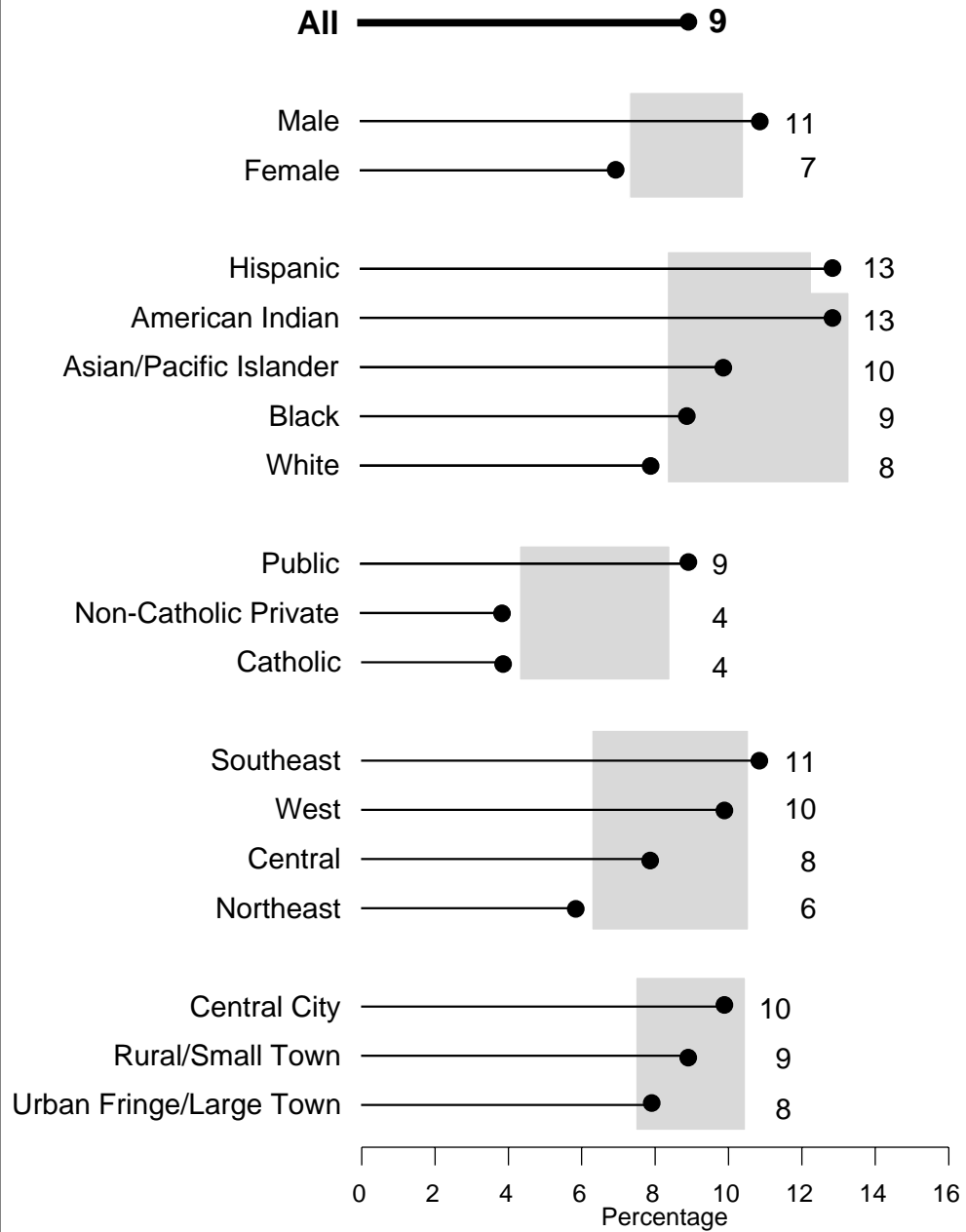
Males were more likely than females to feel unsafe at school and Hispanic eighth-graders were more likely to feel unsafe than White

eighth-graders. Students attending schools in the Southeast were more likely to report feeling unsafe than students attending schools in the Northeast, and students attending public schools were more likely to feel unsafe than other students.

Figure 5 shows the data for each of the states (and the District of Columbia) that participated in the 1996 NAEP mathematics assessment. In this Figure, as in other state charts in this section, the states that are significantly different from the U.S. average are shown in color and square markers are used to display their data points. As shown in the chart, eighth-graders attending schools in North Dakota, Massachusetts, Nebraska, Connecticut, Iowa, and Maine were less likely than the U.S. average to feel unsafe or very unsafe at school. Students in New Mexico, Florida, South Carolina, Mississippi, and the District of Columbia were more likely than average to feel unsafe at school.

¹¹ Any differences discussed in this section are statistically significant.

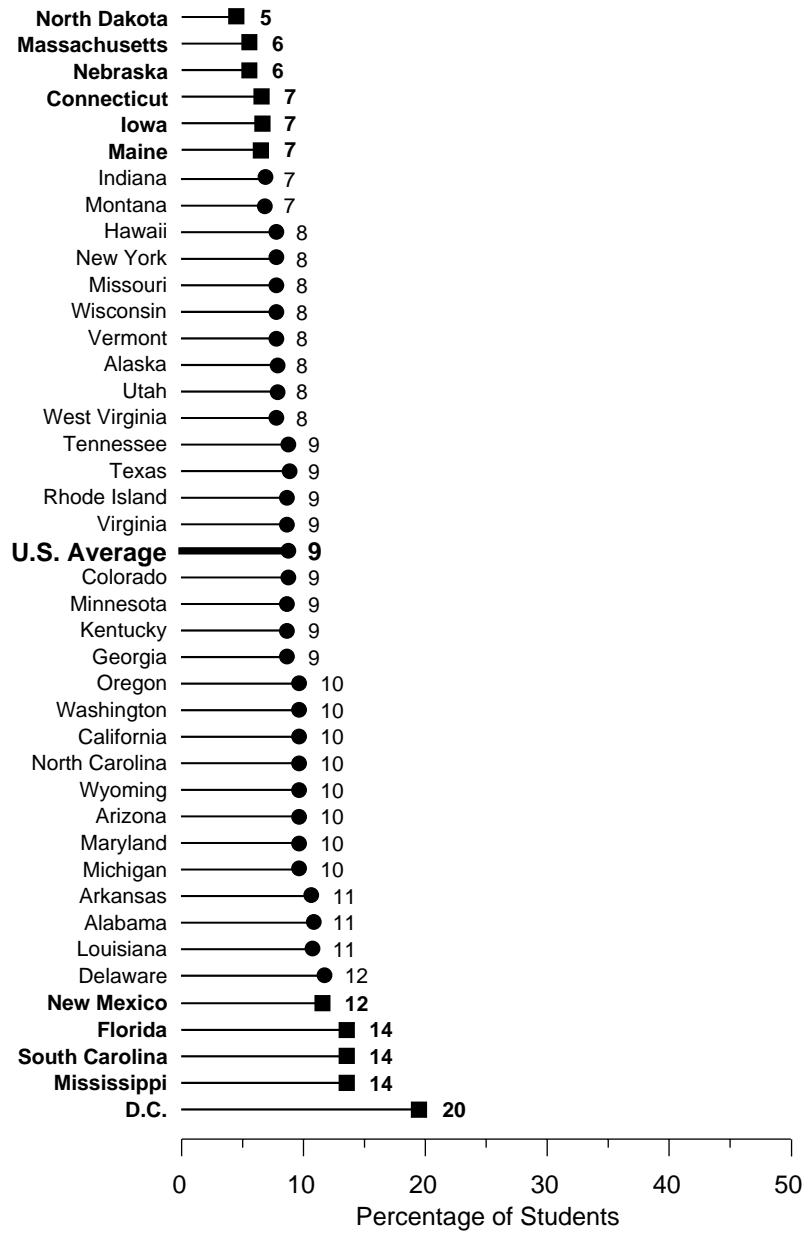
Figure 4: Percentage of Eighth-Graders Who Feel Unsafe or Very Unsafe at School, 1996



Note: Only data points on opposite sides of the shaded area are statistically significantly different from one another.

Source: NAEP 1996 Mathematics Assessment

Figure 5: Percentage of Eighth-Graders Who Feel Unsafe or Very Unsafe at School, 1996



Note: Color text and square marker indicate that the state is statistically significantly different from the U.S. average.

Source: NAEP 1996 Mathematics Assessment

INCIDENCE OF SCHOOL CRIME

The Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1994 required NCES to collect data on the frequency, seriousness, and incidence of violence in public elementary and secondary schools. The Principal/School Disciplinarian Survey on School Violence, 1996-97, collected the data and provides the information in the section below.¹²

Public school principals were asked to report the number of incidents of various kinds of crime that had occurred at their schools during 1996-97 and were reported to the police or other law enforcement representatives. These data are shown in Figure 6.

Topping the list, principals reported nearly 188,000 fights or physical attacks not involving weapons. There were 115,500 thefts, 98,490 incidences of vandalism,

nearly 11,000 fights or physical attacks with a weapon, 7,150 robberies, and 4,170 incidences of rape or sexual battery.

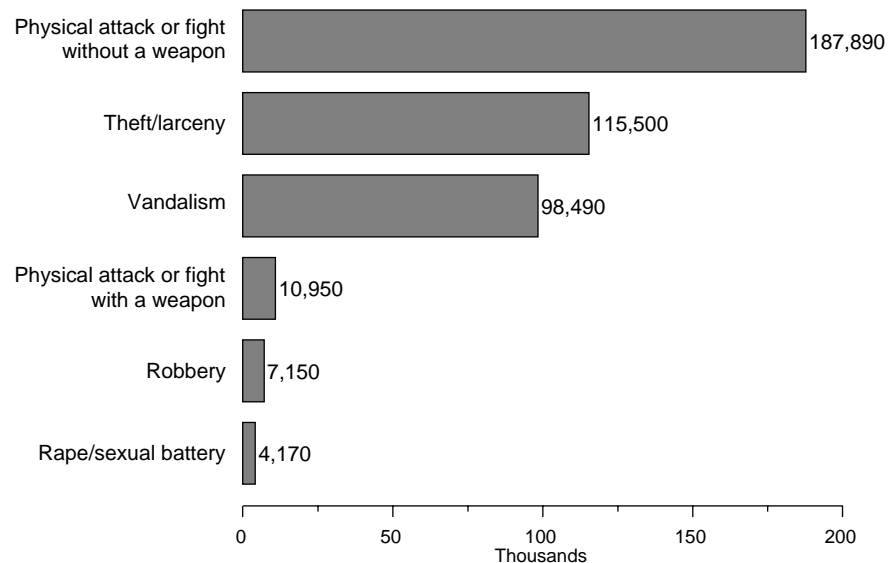
As shown in Figure 7, 38 percent of the nation's public schools experienced one or more incidents of vandalism, 31 percent reported thefts or larceny, and 28 percent reported physical attacks or fights without a weapon. Smaller percentages of schools reported attacks with weapons, robberies, and sexual crimes.

Taken together, 57 percent of U.S. public schools reported that at least one of these crimes had occurred and had been reported to the police.¹³ Ten percent of schools reported that at least one serious violent crime such as rape or sexual battery, suicide, physical attacks or fights with a weapon, or robbery had occurred at the school.

The NCES report notes some differences among schools:

- Middle and high schools were more likely than elementary schools to report that any crime at all occurred, and more likely to report incidents of serious violent crime.
- Crime was more likely to occur in larger schools, as was serious violent crime.
- Schools in cities were at least twice as likely to report serious

Figure 6: Number of Various Crimes Occurring in Public Schools, 1996-97

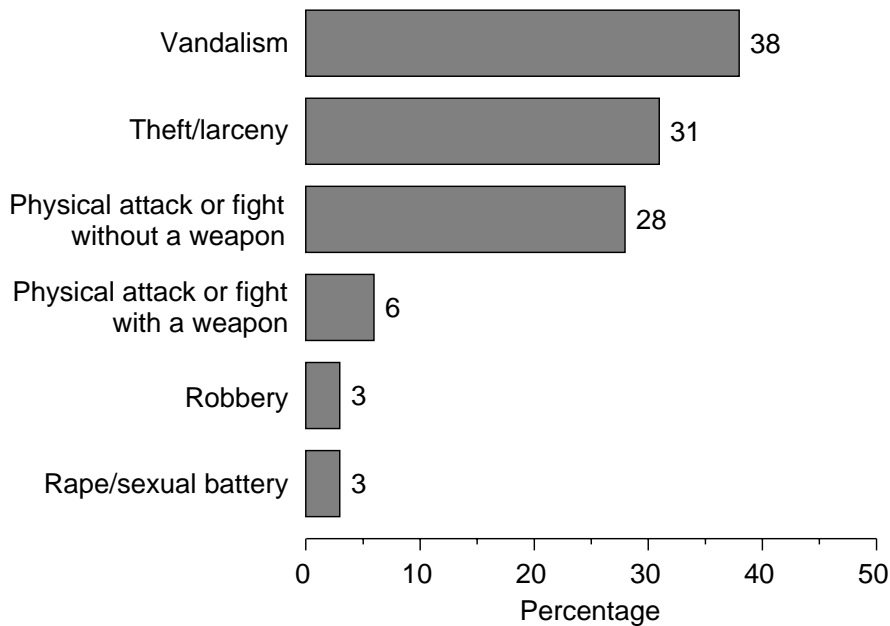


Source: NCES, 1998

¹² U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. *Violence and Discipline Problems in U.S. Public Schools: 1996-97*, NCES 98-030, by Sheila Heavside, Cassandra Rowand, Catrina Williams, and Elizabeth Farris. Project Officers, Shelley Burns and Edith McArthur. Washington, DC: 1998.

¹³ This means that 43 percent of schools did not report contacting police or law enforcement officials about crimes listed in the questionnaire. However, other crimes not specified on the survey questionnaire could have occurred or crimes could have occurred but not been reported to the police.

Figure 7: Percentage of Public Schools Reporting One or More Incidents of Various Crimes, 1996-97



Source: NCES, 1998

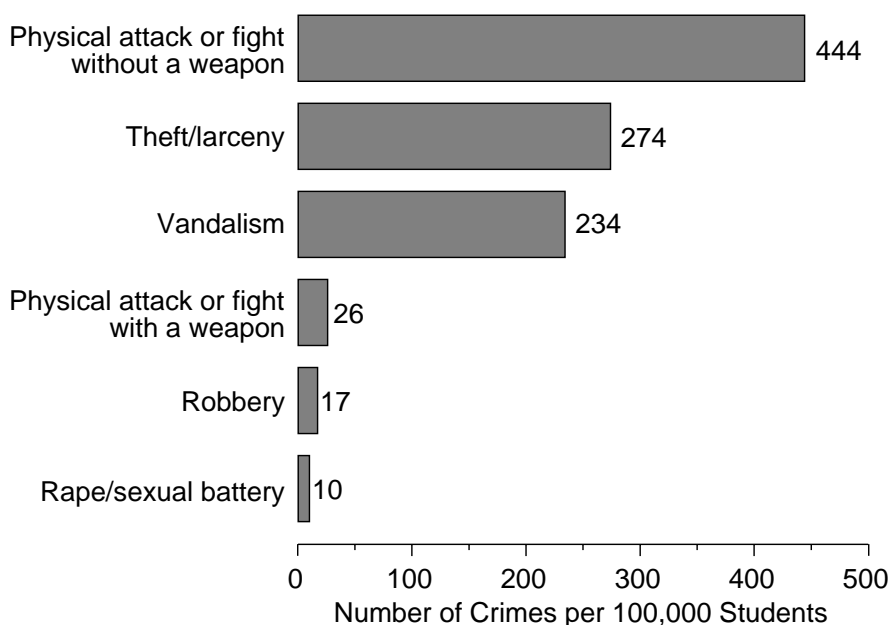
violent crime as those in town and rural locations, although city schools were not significantly different from urban fringe schools.

- Schools with the highest proportion of minority students were more likely to report crimes (and serious violent crimes) than schools with the smallest proportion of minority students.

Since the number of crime incidents is related to the size of the school, another way to measure the problem is to use the ratio of incidents to the number of students. Overall, about 1,000 crimes per 100,000 students were reported in the nation's public schools in 1996-97. This includes 950 crimes per 100,000 that were not serious or violent (theft, vandalism, fights, or assaults without a weapon) and about 50 serious violent crimes per 100,000 students (rape or sexual battery, robbery, suicide, or fight with a weapon). Figure 8 shows the ratios for each type of crime.

For every 100,000 students there were 26

Figure 8: Ratio of Various Crimes per 100,000 Public School Students, 1996-97



Source: NCES, 1998

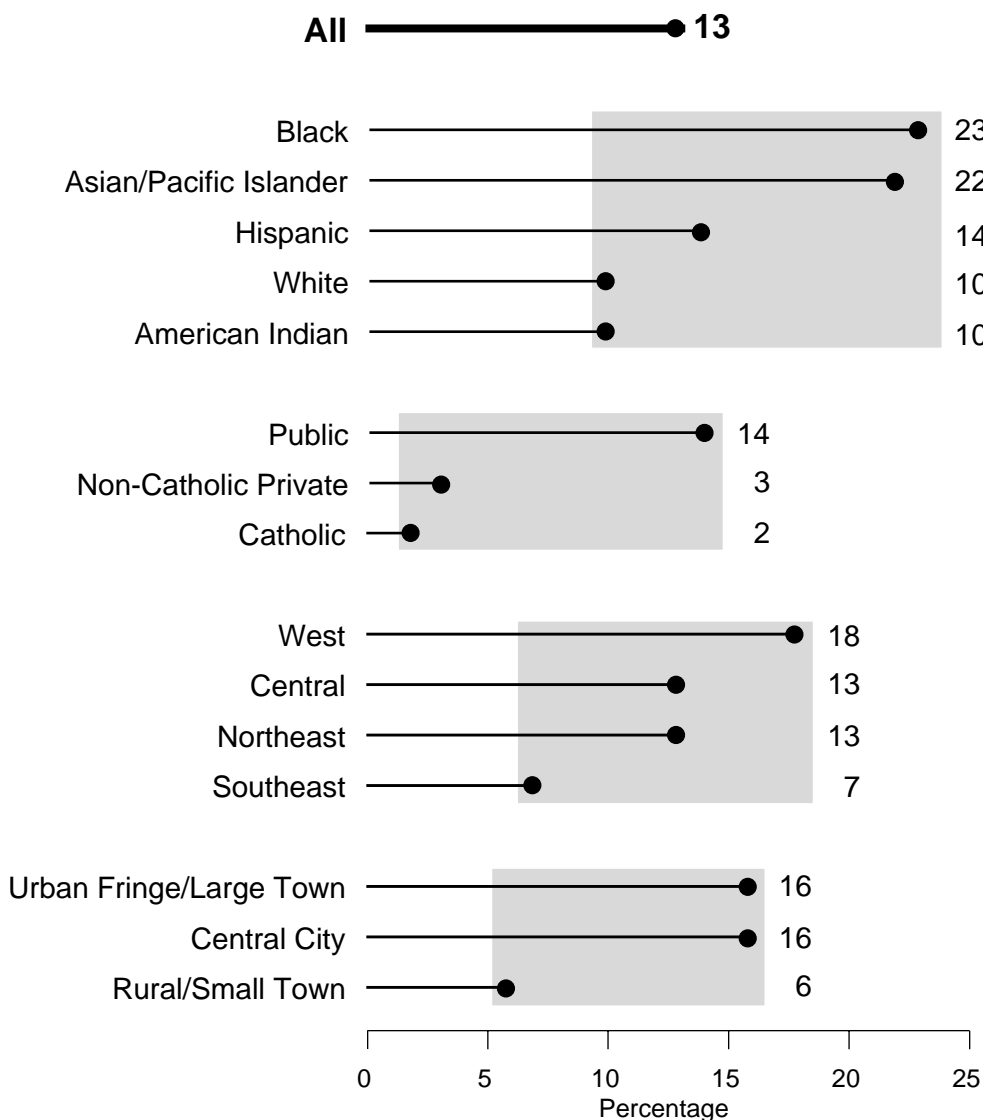
attacks or fights with a weapon, 17 robberies, and 10 rapes/sexual batteries. These represented the most serious crimes at school. Less serious crimes were more frequently reported, including 444 attacks of fights without a weapon, 274 incidents of theft and larceny, and 234 incidents of vandalism per 100,000 public school students.

A DEEPER LOOK AT SOME SCHOOL DISCIPLINE PROBLEMS

Questionnaires were completed by school personnel as part of the 1996 NAEP mathematics assessment that provide information on school discipline problems at the grade levels assessed. Here, we present the data for eighth-graders and note statistically significant differences among various groups of students.

Physical Conflicts. In 1996, about 13 percent of the nation's eighth-graders attended schools where physical conflicts were reported to be a serious or moderate problem. These data are shown in Figure 9. There were no statistically significant differences among different groups of students, although

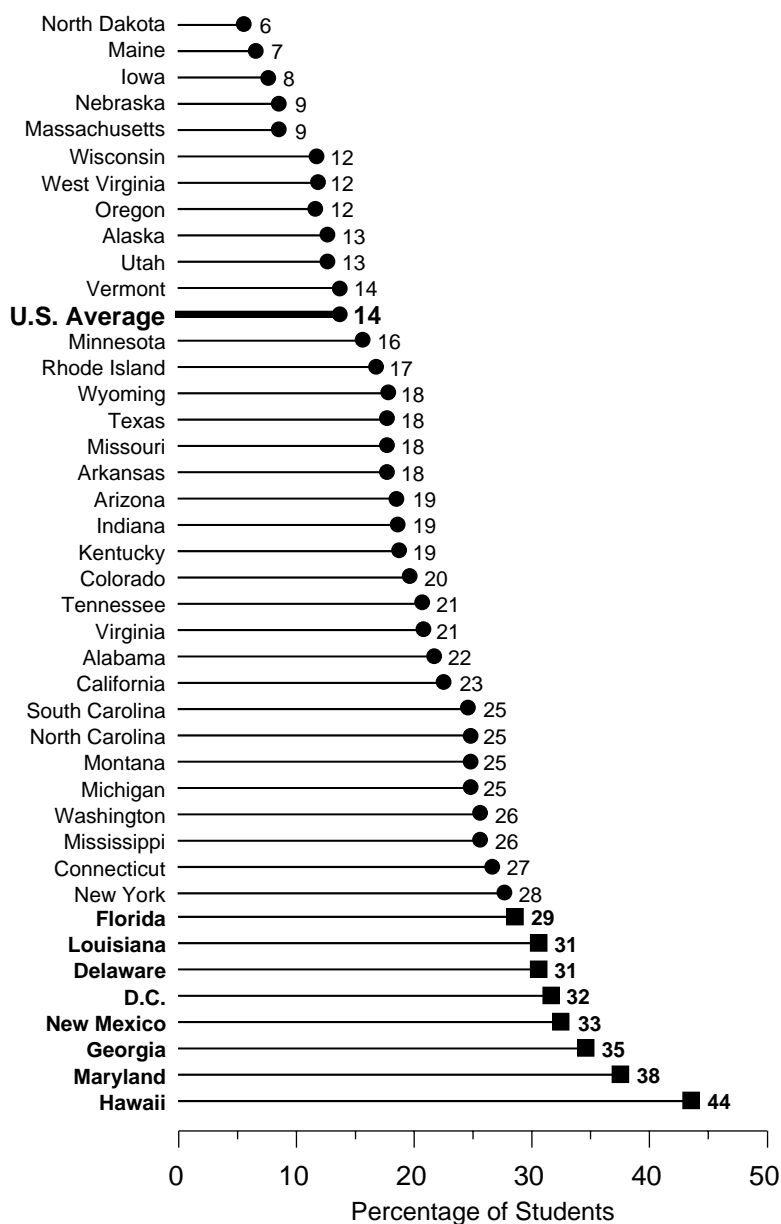
Figure 9: Percentage of Eighth-Graders Whose Schools Report that Physical Conflicts Are a Serious or Moderate Problem, 1996



Note: Only data points on opposite sides of the shaded area are statistically significantly different from one another.

Source: NAEP 1996 Mathematics Assessment

Figure 10: Percentage of Eighth-Graders Whose Schools Report that Physical Conflicts Are a Moderate or Serious Problem in Their School, 1996



Note: Color text and square marker indicate that the state is statistically significantly different from the U.S. average.

Source: NAEP 1996 Mathematics Assessment

students attending public schools appeared to be more likely to experience this type of problem at school.

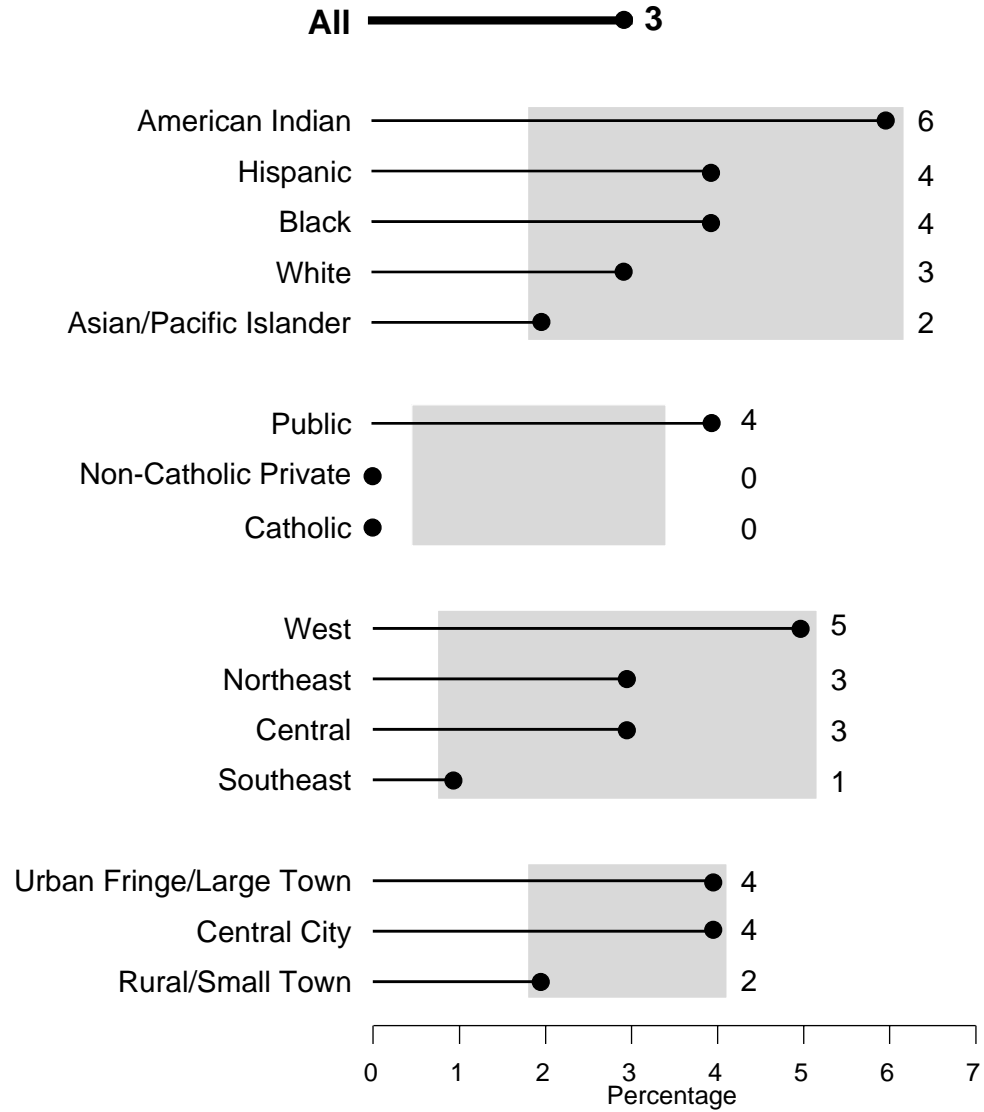
Differences among the states are shown in Figure 10. While none of the participating states were significantly below the U.S. average in physical conflict problems, eight states were above the average — Florida, Louisiana, Delaware, District of Columbia, New Mexico, Georgia, Maryland, and Hawaii.¹⁴

Racial/Cultural Conflicts. Only 3 percent of the nation's eighth-graders attended school where racial/cultural conflicts were reported to be serious or moderate problems. These data are shown in Figure 11. Public schools were more likely to report problems than other schools.

Figure 12 shows the data for participating states. Eighth-graders attending schools in Wyoming, Delaware, New Mexico, California, and Hawaii were more likely than the U.S. average to attend schools where racial/cultural conflicts were a

¹⁴ This situation, where there may be states that are statistically significantly above the national average, but no states significantly below the average (or vice versa) can be due to sampling error and/or the fact that not all states participate in the NAEP state assessment while the national average used for comparison includes students from all states.

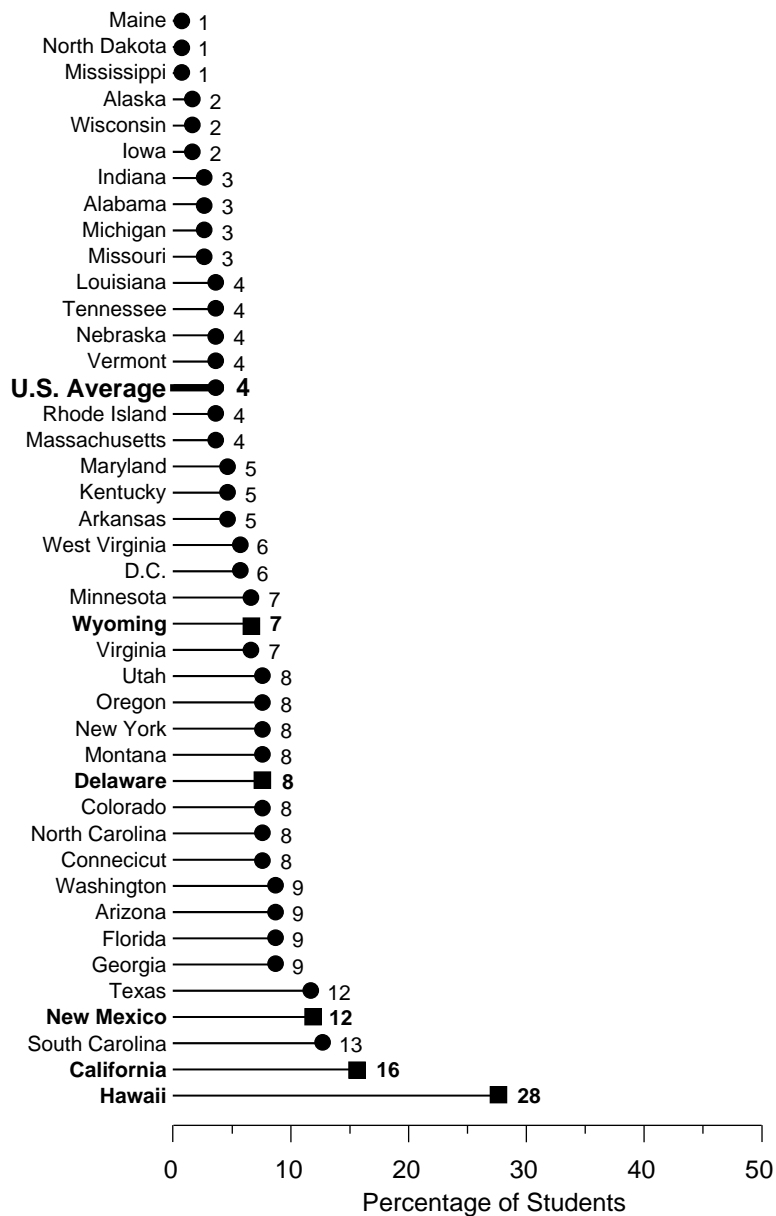
Figure 11: Percentage of Eighth-Graders Whose Schools Report that Racial/Cultural Conflicts Are a Serious or Moderate Problem, 1996



Note: Only data points on opposite sides of the shaded area are statistically significantly different from one another.

Source: NAEP 1996 Mathematics Assessment

Figure 12: Percentage of Eighth-Graders Whose Schools Report that Racial or Cultural Conflicts Are a Moderate or Serious Problem, 1996



Note: Color text and square marker indicate that the state is statistically significantly different from the U.S. average.

Source: NAEP 1996 Mathematics Assessment

problem. There were no states significantly below the average.

Student Drug Use.

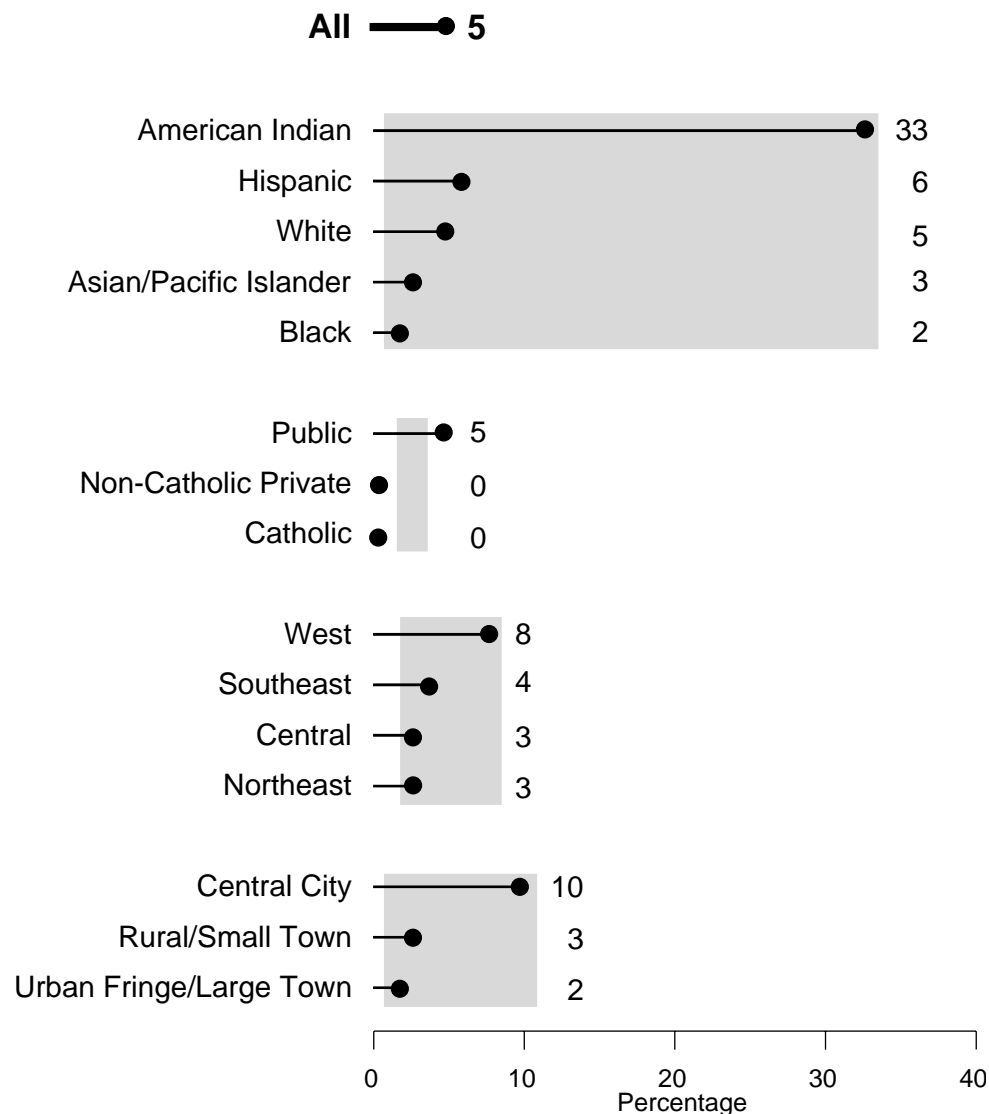
About 5 percent of U.S. eighth-graders attended schools in 1996 where student drug use was reported to be a moderate or serious problem (Figure 13). Students attending public schools were more likely than other students to attend schools where drug use was a problem.

Figure 14 shows the data for the participating states. Eleven states were significantly above the U.S. average, reporting a larger problem with drug use — District of Columbia, North Dakota, Delaware, Minnesota, Oregon, Vermont, Wyoming, Hawaii, Washington, Alaska, and New Mexico. There were no states that were significantly below the U.S. average.

TRENDS IN SCHOOL DISCIPLINE PROBLEMS

Trend data are available on principals' perceptions of school discipline problems (except gangs) for 1991 and 1997. Data for public high schools are presented in Figure 15 and show the percentage of high school principals

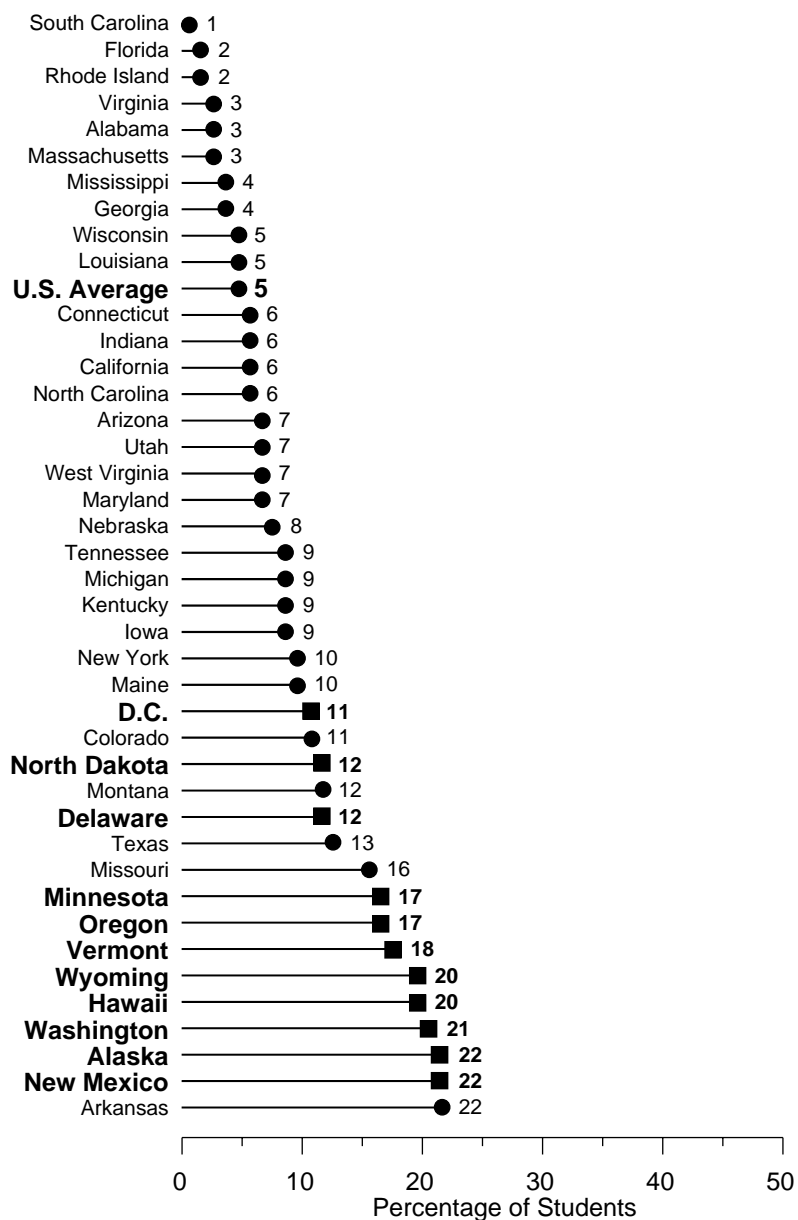
Figure 13: Percentage of Eighth-Graders Whose Schools Report that Student Drug Use Is a Serious or Moderate Problem, 1996



Note: Only data points on opposite sides of the shaded area are statistically significantly different from one another.

Source: NAEP 1996 Mathematics Assessment

Figure 14: Percentage of Eighth-Graders Whose Schools Report that Student Drug Use Is a Moderate or Serious Problem, 1996



Note: Color text and square marker indicate that the state is statistically significantly different from the U.S. average.

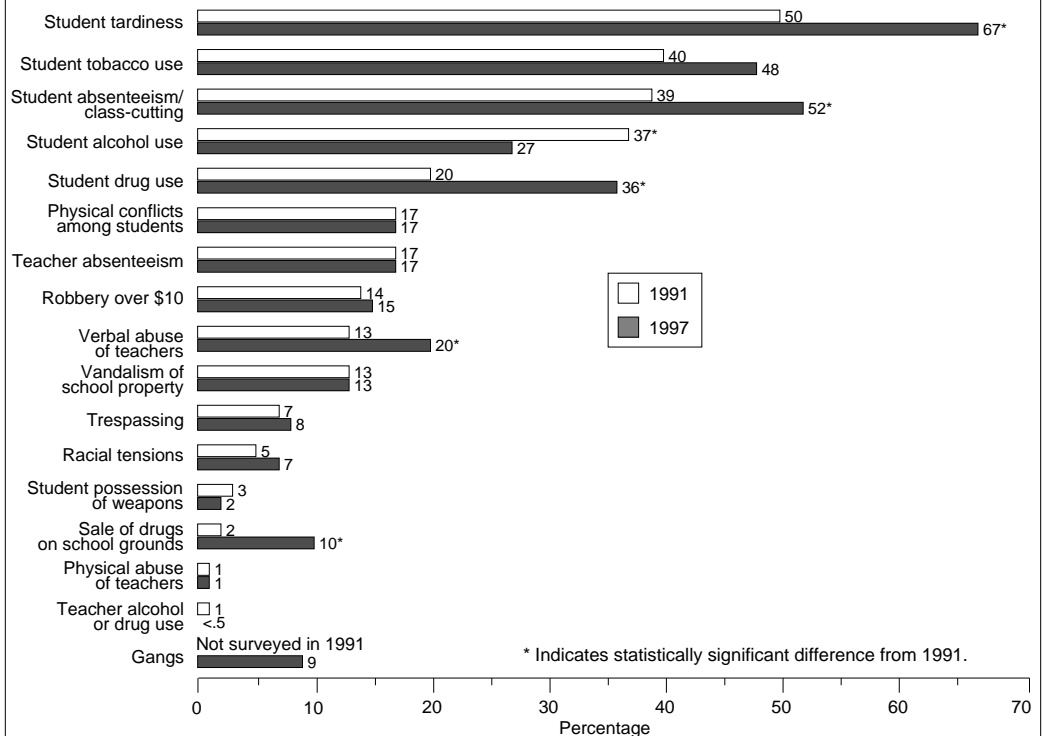
Source: NAEP 1996 Mathematics Assessment

who reported that the specific problem was serious or moderate for the two time periods.

In 1997, the three most serious problems reported by high school principals were student tardiness, absenteeism/class-cutting, and tobacco use, with about half or more principals reporting that these issues were serious or moderate problems in their schools. About one-third of the nation's principals also reported that student drug and alcohol use were serious or moderate problems.

As shown in Figure 15, there were several significant differences between 1991 and 1997. In 1997, more principals reported that student tardiness, absenteeism, class-cutting, drug use, sale of drugs on school grounds, and verbal abuse of teachers were serious or moderate problems than in 1991. On the other hand, fewer principals reported that student alcohol use was a serious or moderate problem in 1997.

Figure 15: Percentage of Public School Principals Reporting that Various Discipline Issues Were Serious or Moderate Problems in Their High Schools, 1990-91 and 1996-97



Source: NCES, 1998

TRENDS IN VICTIMIZATION AT SCHOOL

A recent report issued jointly by the National Center for Education Statistics and the U.S. Department of Justice presents a national portrait of the extent to which children experience violent crime or theft, and their per-

ceptions of the presence of guns, gangs, and drugs at their schools.

The report also highlights changes between 1989 and 1995.¹⁵

Figure 16 shows the percentages of the nation's school children who reported being victimized at school in 1989 and 1995.¹⁶ There was an increase in violent victimization.

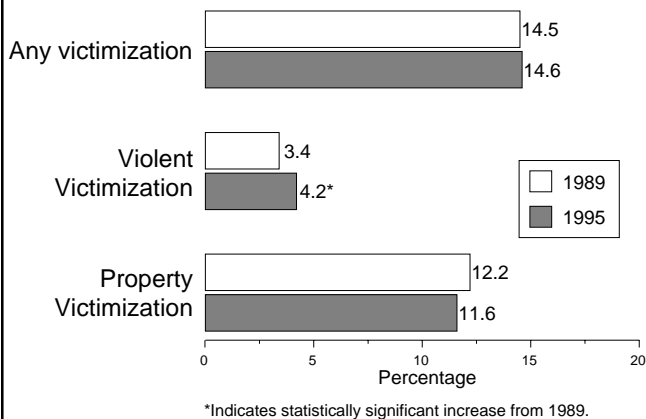
Other differences include:

- Males were more likely than females to experience violent victimization in both years.
- Between 1989 and 1995 there was an increase in the percentage of females who experienced violent victimization.

¹⁵ K.A. Chandler, C.D. Chapman, M.R. Rand, and B.M. Taylor, *Students' Reports of School Crime: 1989 and 1995*. U.S. Department of Education and Justice. NCES 98-241/NCJ-169607. Washington, D.C.: 1998. See <http://www.nces.ed.gov> or www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs. This report is the first focusing on data collected in the 1995 School Crime Supplement (SCS), an enhancement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), an ongoing household survey that gathers information on the victimization of household members age 12 and older.

¹⁶ Violent victimization includes physical attacks or taking property from the student directly by force, weapons, or threats. Property victimization includes theft of property from a student's desk, locker, or other locations.

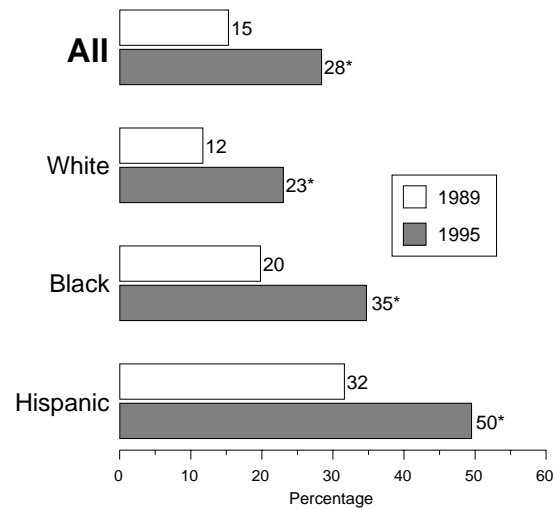
Figure 16: Percentage of Students Ages 12-19 Who Reported Experiencing Victimization at School, 1989 and 1995



*Indicates statistically significant increase from 1989.

Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey, Sprint, 1989 and 1995.

Figure 17: Percentage of Students Ages 12-19 Who Reported that Street Gangs Were Present at School, by Race/Ethnicity, 1989 and 1995



*Indicates statistically significant increase from 1989.

Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey, Sprint, 1989 and 1995.

- Younger students were more likely to experience violent victimization than older students in both years.
 - Students who reported gang presence in their school were more likely to be violently victimized than those who reported no gang presence in school.
- Figure 17 shows the percentage of students who reported that street gangs were present in their schools for the two time periods. Twenty-eight percent of students reported street gang presence in their schools in 1995, compared to only 15 percent in 1989. Differences among racial/ethnic groups include:
- In both 1989 and 1995, Hispanic students were more likely than either White or Black students to report the existence of street gangs in their schools.
 - In both time periods, students in households with lower incomes, students residing in central cities, and students attending public schools were more likely than other students to report the presence of gangs in

their schools. Thirteen percent of students reported knowing another student who had brought a gun to school in 1995 (no trend data are available). While less than one-half of 1 percent of students said that they had brought a gun to school, about 5 percent reported seeing a student at school with a gun. Black students were more likely than White students to report knowing another student who had brought a gun to school, and also to report seeing another student with a gun.

Finally, students residing in central cities and students attending public schools were more likely than other students to report knowing and seeing another student at school with a gun.

These portraits of student misbehavior give some sense of its prevalence. The next section chronicles some efforts to address the problem.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN POLICY AND PRACTICE

This section of the report describes a wide variety of approaches to reducing violence and increasing order and discipline. In some cases it provides examples, and where the data are available, it provides statistics on the prevalence of programs and practices. While evaluation results are unavailable, in some cases the expectations of those advocating the efforts, or in some cases, comparison data coming from administrative or project reports are included.

FEDERAL ACTION

At the Federal level, the 1994 Gun-Free Schools Act has required, since October 1995, that states automatically expel weapon-toting students for at least a year. Enforcement was tied to the receipt of funds under the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Weapons, under the federal law, are defined as guns, bombs, grenades, rockets, and missiles; other weapons, such as knives, can be excluded under state laws. While the students are to be expelled from the schools they attend,

the law leaves it up to the states to figure out how student education might continue. The schools must refer offenders to the criminal or juvenile justice system.

A large problem was encountered in a conflict between this law and the rights conferred by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). According to a 1995 report from the Education Commission of the States, "The contradiction these two laws present has wreaked havoc for education policymakers, educators, and others involved, including students with disabilities who were caught somewhere in the middle of the storm."¹⁷ A change in the law was made in the fall of 1994 to reconcile the two laws.

STATE-WIDE EFFORTS

West Virginia. After many surveys of both citizens and educators about conditions in the schools, and with a strong campaign waged by the West Virginia Federation of Teachers (WVFT), the state passed the Productive and Safe

Schools Act in 1995. It specifies a range of behaviors that are to be eliminated, and who is responsible for doing what. It created zero-tolerance for guns, violence, and drugs on school grounds, on school buses, and at school events. The penalty: a one-year mandatory suspension, and possible expulsion.¹⁸

The WVFT had surveyed teachers in 1994, before passage of the new law, asking them about the frequency with which they encountered different kinds of violence and disruption. Teachers were surveyed again in late 1997, and some conclusions can be drawn regarding how they view the results of the legislation.

Overall, the results suggested dramatic improvement: While the 1994 survey found 44 percent of teachers saying the discipline policies were effective, that percentage rose to 72 percent in the second survey.

However, teachers also found problems in enforcing the new law. Over 25 percent of teachers say that in their

¹⁷ Education Commission of the States, *Youth Violence: A Policymaker's Guide*, March 1996.

¹⁸ From *AFT School Discipline Resource Manual*, 1997.

county there is a lack of alternative placements for chronically disruptive and violent students. Many teachers say that principals are not complying with the law's requirement that they notify teachers in writing of what happens when they send disruptive students to the principal's office.

The most common problems in West Virginia continue to be abusive language used against other students, witnessed by 84 percent of the teachers in the survey; disruptions in or near school buildings (75 percent); threats of violence against other students (63 percent); and abusive language against school employees (55 percent). All were down somewhat since the prior survey, however. Some comparisons of employee dissatisfaction relating to discipline before and after the law are provided below:

- County discipline policy — 93 percent dissatisfied before, 71 percent after

- Verbal assault on another student — 90 percent before, 84 percent after
- Physical assault on a school employee — 24 percent before, 14 percent after
- Weapons — 39 percent before, 23 percent after
- Drugs and alcohol — 45 percent before, 31 percent after

The WVFT continues to pursue better discipline, and has issued a series of recommendations to strengthen safety and order in the schools, including improving outreach to parents, providing in-service training for principals, stepping up drug and alcohol education in the early grades, and additional funding for alternative schools.¹⁹

Texas. In the summer of 1995, Texas passed the "Safe Schools Act."

- Each school district must adopt a student code of conduct that specifies the violations for which a student

can be removed from class, from school, or from an alternative education program.

- An alternative education program must be available for students removed from regular classrooms.
- Districts must outline conditions under which a student may be suspended or expelled.
- Written documentation of disciplinary actions and their circumstances, of no more than one page, must be provided.
- Teachers have the legal authority to send students to the principal's office.
- In cases of chronically disruptive behavior, the teacher has the right to remove from class students who are unruly, disruptive, or abusive.

As in West Virginia, the Texas Federation of Teachers waged a campaign to deal with disruptive student

behavior and conducted a member survey in April of 1993:

- Thirty-six percent said there was a significant problem in their classrooms, and 83 percent said there was a significant problem in their schools.
- Thirty-six percent had been subjected to abusive or profane language, 17 percent to threats of physical violence, 8 percent had been assaulted.
- Sixty-six percent had seen vandalism to school property, 53 percent assaults on students, 37 percent drug abuse, and 39 percent student gangs.
- Fifty-nine percent of teachers thought that during 1992-93, student violence had become more of a problem, 26 percent found no difference, and 5 percent found violence less of a problem. Over the previous five years, 86 percent thought it had become more of a problem.

¹⁹ West Virginia Federation of Teachers, *Report Card on the West Virginia Safe and Productive Schools Act*, 1997.

CODES OF BEHAVIOR

While the previous section describes state-wide approaches to violent behavior and disorder through passage of state laws, individual school systems may have a "code of behavior" they make widely known to students, teachers, parents, and school administrators. The American Federation of Teachers, in looking at such codes, found several it thought exemplary. The Cincinnati code is reproduced here in its entirety on pages 36, 37, and 38. The district has a separate code for grades K-6, written to be more understandable to young children.

The existence of codes, of course, may mean very little unless there is good communication about their contents and active and consistent enforcement. And when there are expulsions, schools need a continuum of alternative placement opportunities for the students. As exemplary approaches, the American Federation of Teachers has singled out three programs — the Toledo Behavior Specialist Program, the Teuch Tilghman Elementary School In-School Crisis and

Supervision Center, and the Oklahoma City Alternative Middle School.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING CONTRACTS

Generally, collective bargaining contracts make some mention of student discipline. It is one way that codes of conduct may be developed and enforced, spelling out exactly what a teacher can do when faced with problem of a disruptive student. One example of a useful approach provided by the American Federation of Teachers is the contract language of the Minneapolis Federation of Teachers #0059. It is reproduced on pages 39 and 40.

CHARACTER EDUCATION

What has come to be called character education is, of course, a much broader subject than its role in school behaviors, and is of importance both to the development of the individual and the health of the society. Character is the product of experience in the family, the church, the community, and the school. The school does play a significant role, whether intended or unintended, and whether

the role is formalized or not.

An emphasis on character, of course, was part and parcel of early American schooling, to be seen on almost any page of a *McGuffey's Reader*. But to jump to present day America, there was a revival in discussions of moral development in the 1980s.

The largest and clearest impetus for character education was the Aspen Conference on Character Education, in the summer of 1992. The Aspen Declaration led to what is called the Character Counts!™ approach. This program has provided material to help educators shape their own programs and approaches. The Aspen Declaration itself is provided on page 41.

As of May of 1997, the Character Counts! Coalition, a project of the Josephson Institute of Ethics, included 12 national and 53 regional education organizations, 16 national youth development and service organizations, and 83 community organizations.

The coalition is based on the theory that if students internalize the right values, and their actions are informed by those values, they will

become responsible citizens in the school hall and school room, as they will in the community as a whole. There are now many character education programs in the schools, and a considerable number of organizations and projects advocating and supporting efforts within the schools.

BETTER EDUCATION, BETTER DISCIPLINE

Much of this report has been about the roles order and discipline play in increasing student achievement and raising the quality of education. Another view of the situation, however, turns this around completely. This view holds that poor education creates problems of order and discipline. A third view is that it's both.

Students faced with unchallenging subject matter may become bored and search for other outlets for their energies. Students turned off by endless rote memory exercises may look for diversions. Good teaching based on sound instructional principles will capture students' attention and their respect.

These arguments are advanced by a variety of

Code of Suspension, Expulsion, and Removal

Grades 7-12

■ Time-Out

A student may be denied the right to attend regular classes and be assigned to an approved alternative classroom setting within the school for a period not to exceed one-half of the student's regular school-day schedule. The student will continue to do assigned work during time-out.

■ In-School Suspension

A student may be denied the right to attend regular classes and assigned to an approved alternative classroom setting within the same school. This disciplinary action will not exceed ten (10) consecutive school days. The student will continue to do assigned work during this time. In-school suspension may be used in lieu of suspension except in cases where the offense leading to suspension is listed as a mandatory expulsion offense. A student who has been assigned to in-school suspension may be denied the right to participate in extracurricular activities.

■ Suspension

A student may be denied the right to attend school classes or functions for a period not to exceed ten (10) school days. A suspension may be appealed to the superintendent or his/her designee (Office of Student Discipline), and finally, to the Board of Education. The student will continue to do assigned work during suspension.

■ Expulsion

A student may be denied the right to attend school classes or functions for a period not to exceed eighty (80) school days, unless a firearm or knife was involved and then up to one year. If the balance of the current school year is less than you were expelled for, the remainder will be served in the following school year. An expulsion may be appealed to the Board of Education.

■ Removal (Emergency Suspension Pending a Hearing)

A student may be removed from curricular or extracurricular activities or from the school premises without prior notice or a hearing if his/ her presence poses an immediate danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process taking place either within a classroom or elsewhere on the school premises. Similarly, a teacher may remove a student from activities under his/her supervision if such conditions exist. As soon as practical after making such a removal, the teacher shall submit in writing to the principal the reasons for such removal.

A removal may be appealed to the superintendent or his/her designee (Office of Student Discipline).

■ Permanent Exclusion

The Board of Education may seek the permanent exclusion of a student sixteen (16) years of age or older who is either convicted in criminal court or adjudicated delinquent by a juvenile court of any of the following offenses that occur on school grounds or at a school function:

1. illegal conveyance or possession of a deadly weapon or dangerous ordnance, carrying a concealed weapon, aggravated trafficking, trafficking in drugs, trafficking involving the possession of a bulk amount of a controlled substance or the sale of a controlled substance.
2. aggravated murder, murder, voluntary or involuntary manslaughter, felonious or aggravated assault, rape, gross sexual imposition or felonious sexual penetration if the victim is an employee of Cincinnati Public Schools.

If the Board of Education adopts the superintendent's resolution to permanently exclude a student, the board will:

1. forward the written resolution together with the adjudication or conviction and a copy of the student's entire school record, to the state superintendent;
2. promptly designate a representative to present the district's case for permanent exclusion to the state superintendent;
3. forward a copy of the resolution to the student and his/her parent(s), guardian(s), or custodian(s).

Parents have the right to apply to the state superintendent to have their child readmitted to school. If the state superintendent rejects the board's resolution, then the student shall be readmitted to Cincinnati Public Schools.

■ Scope of Prohibited Behavior

Unless other geographic limitations are designated, these acts are prohibited before, during, and after school, in school buildings, on school premises, at other locations while attending school-sponsored activities, or while engaged in school-related conduct, including going to or from school. Conduct is school-related if it involves other school students, property or personnel, or if, at the discretion of the principal, the student's continued presence in school will disrupt the educational process or threaten the welfare of the school community. The rules appearing in this Code of Behavior also pertain to behavior on Metro buses and/or yellow buses/vans which convey students to or from school.

■ Category I

Suspension and/or Expulsion

Each year, the Office of Student Discipline will publish a list of approved alternatives to suspension and establish a procedure for local schools to receive approval for other alternatives developed by Local School Discipline Committees. A student may be assigned inschool or out-of-school suspension or be removed for committing, attempting to commit, aiding or abetting the commission of, conspiring to commit, or participating in any manner, even though unaccomplished, in the commission of any of the offenses designated in this section. A student may be recommended for expulsion for chronic and/or aggravated offenses of Category I behaviors.

■ **1. Unruly Conduct** - A student will not be insubordinate nor refuse to comply with the directions of authorized school personnel during any period of time when the student is under the authority of the school. Not obeying the classroom-related instructions or directions of a teacher is unruly conduct. Refusing to open a particular book, write an assignment, work with another student, work in a group, take a test, or do any other class- or school-related activity not mentioned here constitutes unruly conduct. Refusing to leave a hallway when told by a school staff member, and running away from school staff members when told to stop are other examples of unruly conduct.

■ **2. Disorderly Conduct** - A student will not harass others nor misbehave in a manner that causes disruption or obstruction to the educational process. Disruption caused by talking, making noises, throwing objects, or otherwise distracting another constitutes disorderly conduct. If the teacher is prevented from starting an activity or lesson or has to stop what he/she is doing to try to stop distractive behavior, such behavior is considered disorderly.

■ **3. Profanity and/or Obscenity Toward Students** - A student will not verbally, electronically or by written words, photographs, or drawings direct profanity to any other student nor insult any student by obscene gestures.

■ **4. Sexual Harassment** - A student will not use words, pictures, objects, gestures, or other actions relating to sexual activity or a person's gender that have the effect of causing embarrassment, discomfort, or a reluctance to participate in school activities.

■ **5. Smoking** - A student will not smoke, use tobacco, or possess any substance containing tobacco in any area under the control of a school district or at any activity supervised by school personnel.

■ **6. Defacement of Property** - A student will not willfully cause defacement of or damage to property of the school or others. Actions such as writing in school textbooks or library books, writing on desks or walls, carving into woodwork, desks, or tables, and spray-painting surfaces are actions of defacement.

■ **7. Fraud** - A student will not deceive another nor cause another to be deceived by false or misleading information in order to obtain anything of value.

■ **8. Forgery** - A student will not sign the name of another person for the purpose of defrauding school personnel or the Board of Education.

■ **9. False Identification** - A student will not use another person's identification nor give false identification to any school official with intent to deceive school personnel or falsely obtain money or property.

■ **10. Trespass** - A student will not enter upon the premises of a school other than the one to which he/she is assigned without authorization from the person in charge, nor shall the student return to the assigned school without permission while under suspension, expulsion, or removal.

■ **11. Gambling** - A student will not engage in any game of chance or contest wherein money or other items -of monetary value are awarded to the winner, except for those games and contests authorized as official school functions.

■ **12. Improper Driving Which Is Negligent** - A student will not negligently operate a motor vehicle so as to endanger the property, safety, health, and/or welfare of others.

■ **Category II**
**Mandatory Suspension/
Possible Expulsion**

A student who commits any of the following offenses must be suspended by the principal, and expulsion is authorized and can be considered for committing, attempting to commit, aiding or abetting the commission of, conspiring to commit, or participating in any manner, even though unaccomplished, in the commission of any of the offenses designated in this section. A student may be recommended for expulsion for chronic and/or aggravated offenses of Category II behaviors.

■ **1. Fighting** - A student will not physically fight with another person. Self-defense or defense of others may be taken into account in determining whether this provision has been violated.

■ **2. Profanity and/or Obscenity Toward Staff** - A student will not verbally, electronically or by written words, photographs, or drawings direct profanity to any school personnel or adult volunteer nor insult any school personnel/ volunteer by obscene gestures.

■ **3. Theft/Possession of Stolen Property** - A student will not, without permission of the owner or custodian of the property, take property nor have in his/her possession property which does not belong to him/her.

■ **4. Violent Disorderly Conduct** - student will not, by use of violence, force, coercion, threat of violence, or gang activity, cause disruption or obstruction to the educational process.

Gangs are defined as groups of students and/ or adults who organize for the purpose of engaging in activities that threaten the safety of the general populace, compromise the general community

order, and/or interfere with the school district's education mission.

Gang activity includes:

1. Wearing or displaying any clothing, jewelry, colors, or insignia which identifies the student as a member of a gang or otherwise symbolizes support of a gang.
2. Using any word, phrase, written symbol, or gesture which identifies a student as a member of a gang or otherwise symbolizes support of a gang.
3. Gathering of two or more persons for purposes of engaging in activity or discussion promoting gangs.
4. Recruiting student(s) for gangs.

■ **5. Destruction of Property** - A student will not willfully cause destruction of property of the school or others. Actions that impair the use of something are destructive. Ruining bulletin boards, intentionally clogging the plumbing system, breaking light bulbs or fixtures, and damaging school equipment to the point where repair is necessary are acts of property destruction.

■ **6. Breaking and Entering** - A student will not enter in a stealthy, deceptive, or forceful manner a school building or any part thereof which has been closed.

■ **7. Sexual Misconduct** - A student will not engage in conduct which would appear to the ordinary observer to be sexual misconduct, sexual exposure, or masturbation. Included in sexual misconduct are actions involving minor touching of a sexual nature, With or without consent of the other party.

■ **8. Improper Driving Which Is Intentional/ Reckless** - A student will not intentionally or recklessly operate a motor vehicle so as to endanger the safety, health and/or welfare of others on school property.

■ **Category III**
Mandatory Expulsion

A limited number of offenses constitute the basis for expelling a student. The school principal, finding a student has committed, attempted to commit, aided or abetted in the commission of, conspired to commit, or participated in any manner, even though unaccomplished, in the commission of any of the following offenses, will submit a recommendation to the superintendent of schools that the student be expelled from school attendance. The principal will immediately notify the police when a criminal offense in this category is committed.

■ **1. Alcohol and Drugs** - A student will not possess, use, offer to buy or sell, purport to sell and/or sell a controlled substance, dangerous drug, prescription drug, counterfeit drug, intoxicating substance, or alcohol. A student legally in possession of prescribed medication will not be in violation of this section as long as his/her use and possession of the prescribed medication is authorized at school (See Policy No. 5113.3).

■ **2. Physical Assault** - A student will not physically attack another person unless clearly in self-defense.

■ **3. Dangerous Weapons** - You shall not possess, handle, transmit, or use as a dangerous weapon an instrument capable of harming another person. Dangerous weapons include, but are not limited to:

a. Firearms-A student shall not possess, handle, transmit, conceal or use a firearm. Students violating the firearms prohibition shall be expelled for one calendar year. A firearm is:

Any weapon (including a starter gun) which will, or is designed to, or may readily be converted to, expel a projectile by action or an explosive, including the frame or receiver of any such weapon and any firearm muffler or silencer or any destructive device (as defined in 18 USCA Section 921) which includes any explosive, incendiary, or poisonous gas bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, missiles having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than four ounces, missiles having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one quarter ounce, mine, or device similar to any of the devices described above.

b. Knife-You shall not possess, handle, transmit, conceal, or use a knife. Students violating the prohibition against knives shall be expelled for up to one calendar year.

■ **4. False Fire Alarm or Bomb Report, Tampering with Fire Alarm System** - Unless an emergency exists, a student will not willfully sound a fire alarm or cause a fire alarm to be sounded, nor will a student falsely communicate or cause to be communicated that a bomb is located in a building or on the premises of a building owned by the Cincinnati City School District. These acts are prohibited irrespective of the whereabouts of the student. A student will not destroy, damage, or otherwise tamper with a fire alarm system in a school building.

■ **5. Sexual Assault** - A student will not sexually attack nor abuse another person.

■ **6. Robbery** - A student will not take nor attempt to take from another person any property by force or threat of force, expressed or implied.

■ **7. Extortion** - A student will not make another person do any act against his/her will by force or threat of force, expressed or implied.

■ **8. Starting a Fire** - A student will not willfully by means of fire cause harm to property or any person nor participate in the burning of property or any person.

■ **9. Fireworks** - A student will not possess, handle, transmit, conceal, nor use any fireworks or firecrackers.

■ **10. Indictment** - If an indictment or juvenile warrant is issued for a student on a charge that involves drugs or alcohol and that is also school-related, the principal will, upon notification of that indictment or juvenile warrant, recommend to the superintendent that the student be expelled.

The Cincinnati Public Schools provides equal educational, vocational, and employment opportunities for all people without regard to race, gender, ethnicity, color, age, disability, religion, national origin, creed, sexual orientation or affiliation with a union or professional organization. The district is in compliance with Title IX and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act. For additional information, contact the Title IX Coordinator or Section 504 Student Coordinator at 475-7000. TDD# 475-7030.

Produced by the Public Affairs Department in cooperation with the Office of Student Discipline, September, 1996.

Parent Information

■ The Disciplinary Rights of Parents/ Guardians

As the parent/guardian of a child who the principal finds has committed any of the offenses in Categories I, II, or III, you have the right to:

1. be contacted by phone as soon as possible to learn that your child is involved in a possible suspension or expulsion;
2. receive written notice of suspension or expulsion mailed to your home;
3. request and receive a meeting with the school administrator to discuss the incident,
4. request and receive a report of the school's investigation of the incident;
5. receive appeal procedure information from the principal;
6. appeal a suspension in writing to the superintendent or his/her designee (Office of Student Discipline) when you are not satisfied with the decision of the principal;
7. appeal an expulsion by writing to the district's hearing officer with the reason for appealing the expulsion.

■ Administrative Steps Following a Charge of Student Misbehavior

If your child commits or is accused of committing any of the offenses listed, a school administrator will:

1. investigate the incident;
2. contact you;
3. send you a letter of intent to suspend;
4. conduct an informal hearing with you, your child, and any others who may have been involved to provide an opportunity to challenge the charge or explain the circumstances;

5. send you a written notice of suspension or suspension with the intent to expel;
6. inform you of your right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent or his/her designee (Office of Student Discipline).

■ Dispute Resolution

All efforts should be made to resolve disputes not involving suspension or expulsion at the school level. Such disputes that are not resolved at the school level may be mediated through the Office of Student Discipline.

■ Due Process Procedures for Suspension

A student facing a suspension, whether in school or out-of-school, is entitled to the following procedures prior to suspension unless his/her presence in the school poses a danger to people or property or an ongoing threat of disruption to the educational process.

After concluding an investigation, the administrator should conduct a hearing with the student during which he/she.

1. gives the student written notice of the reason(s) for the intended suspension, including all rules violated;
2. informs the student of the evidence if the student denies the charges;
3. gives the student a reasonable opportunity to tell his/her side of the story,
4. reviews the evidence to determine if it is sufficient to establish that the student violated the rule(s) for which he/she was charged;
5. determines the appropriate disciplinary action;
6. informs the student of the disciplinary action that will be imposed. If suspension is determined to be appropriate, the administrator will provide the student with a written copy of the notice of intent to suspend and mail a copy of the notice to the parent/

guardian within twenty-four (24) hours of his/her decision to suspend. The notice of suspension must include the following:

- a. the reason(s) for the suspension;
- b. notice of the right to appeal the action to the principal, and then to the superintendent or his/her designee, (Office of Student Discipline);
- c. the final right of appeal is to the Board of Education;
- d. notice that such appeal hearing(s) may, upon request, be held in executive session (privately);

7. notifies a parent or guardian by phone, if possible, to inform him/her of the action taken prior to sending his/her child home.

■ Due Process Procedures for Emergency Removal From School by an Administrator

If a student is removed under this section, written notice of a hearing, including the reasons for the removal, will be given to the student as soon as practical, and the hearing will be held within seventy-two (72) hours of the removal. The individual who ordered, caused, or requested the removal will be present at the hearing.

A removal may be appealed to the superintendent or his/her designee (Office of Student Discipline).

■ Suspensions and Expulsions of Students on Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)

All special education board policies, Administrative Procedures, and state and federal regulations must be followed in suspending and expelling students on individual education plans. Students may not be suspended or expelled beyond the established time limits. A duly constituted team may make an appropriate change of placement decision.

Minneapolis Contract Language

Minneapolis Federation of Teachers
#0059

Student Behavior/Discipline

At each site, teachers, administrators, parents and students (when age appropriate) will design and implement a student behavior plan which will address meeting the social/emotional needs of its students. The behavior plan will reflect the current "Student Fair Dismissal Law" as modified in 1995 (see Section VI, page 213) and be part of the School Improvement Plan, and as such will be reviewed each year by the School and Site Services Office.

The rights of students to an education shall be protected in all cases. The rights of employees and students to a safe education/working environment shall be ensured, as well as the expectation that their personal property will not be damaged or destroyed.

Within the bounds defined by the data privacy laws, information about students with violent behaviors will be shared with teachers.

The Behavior Plan will provide:

- A. Strategies which will promote positive student behaviors; and
- B. Strategies which will address prevention of inappropriate behaviors; and,
- C. Strategies for intervention and discipline which will include:
 1. A process for a teacher to temporarily remove from the classroom any student who, in the teacher's opinion, is exhibiting violent behavior or causing serious disruption of the educational process.
 2. A process for returning the student to the classroom after appropriate interventions and discipline have been determined.
 3. A process for returning the student to the site, district, or other alternative programs after intervention and discipline strategies have been attempted. If the behavior is so violent or involves the possession or use of a weapon, then the plan will follow the District's expulsion policy and procedures.

4. A plan to provide support, services, and/or programs to victims of violence.
5. A process for assessing and identifying elements of inappropriate behavior(s) which include biased or prejudicial acts against an individual or group based upon their status as it relates to national origin, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, disability, or sexual and affectional orientation, to determine the appropriate consequences.

D. The behavior plan to promote positive behavior, or prevent negative behavior, and intervene with applied discipline shall be evaluated each year as part of the normal review of the School Improvement Plan. This goal addresses the issues of safety and violence and its effect on student achievement and community trust. (See Section H, page 104, "Eliminating the Gap: Ensuring That All Students Learn", adopted June 27, 1995.)

For those sites that are not able on their own to design or implement such a plan, a team comprised of union representatives and representatives from the School and Site Services Office will assist that site with the development of a plan.

This article shall not be subject to the grievance procedure.

Relationship with Students

Discipline Policy Statement-Elementary Schools

A teacher may temporarily remove from his/her classroom by referral to the office any child who in the teacher's opinion is causing serious disruption of the educational process. In the absence of a building administrator, the teacher shall notify the parent and make appropriate arrangements for the child. The teacher shall provide the principal with appropriate information concerning the disruption and before leaving the building, shall provide the principal with a written statement of the problem. The teacher and principal shall confer on the same day, or at the earliest possible time if the principal is out of the building on the day of the incident, and attempt to reach a mutually agreeable solution to the problem.

After the teacher-principal conference, the parent shall be notified and if the teacher and/or principal believes that a conference should be held with the parent(s), such a conference should be arranged. Supportive staff members may be present at such a conference so that maximum information might be gathered concerning the child.

Assuming appropriate arrangements have been made for the child, he/she shall remain out of the teacher's classroom until a conference is held between the teacher and the principal or parent(s), teacher and principal. In no case shall this exclusion exceed three (3) days. If a mutually agreeable solution is not reached through the parent/teacher/principal

conference, the teacher may ask that a duly constituted review panel composed of licensed personnel from the building be called to hear the case the day following the conference.

The panel will hear statements from the teacher and principal involved in the case. The parent(s) should be notified and have the right to appear or send their designated representative to appear at the hearing. The panel will make its decision in private and by secret ballot. The chairperson will count the ballots. The panel's decision for solution shall be binding at the local school level, but shall not be in conflict with existing procedures and policies of the Board of Education. The panel shall make known immediately its decision and findings to the principal, teacher and parent(s). Within thirty-six (36) hours of its meeting, the panel should prepare a written report to be submitted to the interested parties.

In all cases the right of the child to an education must be protected.

Recommended Composition of the Panel: The panel shall consist of two (2) classroom teachers elected by the faculty or their alternates and the social worker who shall be responsible for keeping records of the proceedings. The teacher involved in the particular incident may not serve on the panel.

Discipline Policy Statement-Secondary Schools

A teacher may temporarily remove from his/her class by referral to the office any child who in the teacher's opinion is causing serious disruption of the education process. The teacher shall provide the principal or assistant principal with appropriate information concerning the disruption and before leaving the building shall provide the principal or assistant principal with a written statement of the problem. The teacher and administrator shall confer on the same day and attempt to reach a mutually agreeable solution to the situation.

If the teacher and administrator believe that a conference with the parent(s) would be desirable, such a conference shall be arranged as soon as possible. If the exclusion from the class is to exceed three (3) days, such a conference shall be mandatory. Supportive staff members may be present at such a conference so that maximum information might be gathered concerning the child.

When the teacher recommends exclusion from his/her class, he/she shall ask that a duly constituted review panel composed of licensed personnel from the building be called to hear the case during the next defined school day. Normally the panel will meet between 3:00 p.m. and 3:45 p.m. The child shall not return to class until the teacher has accepted him back or until the panel has acted.

The panel will hear testimony from the teacher and administrator involved in the case. The child and his/her designated representative have the right to appear and speak

at the hearing. Other witnesses may be called. The panel will make its decision in private and by secret ballot. The chairperson will count the ballots. Then panel shall on or before the close of the next school day make known its findings to the administrator, parent, child and teacher involved in the incident. Within 36 hours of the meeting, the panel shall prepare a written report which should be submitted to interested parties.

If the panel recommends that the child not be returned to the teacher's class, the panel shall report its findings directly to the parent and it shall recommend an alternative educational plan for the child. In all cases, the right of the child to an education will be protected.

The panel shall select its own chairperson. It should consist of five (5) licensed professionals from the building in which the incident occurred. The members of the panel shall be selected in the following manner:

1. A member of the pupil personnel team selected by that team to serve for one year.
2. The teacher involved in the incident may select one (1) of his/her colleagues to serve on the panel.
3. The student involved in the incident may select a teacher to serve on the panel. If the child chooses not to appoint a teacher, the administrator may do so.
4. Another administrator from the building shall serve on the panel.
5. The process by which the fifth member of the panel is selected shall be determined by the Facility Council.

Parents of the child may appear at the hearing.

THE ASPEN DECLARATION

- 1 *The next generation will be the stewards of our communities, nation, and planet in extraordinarily critical times.*
- 2 *The present and future well-being of our society requires an involved, caring citizenry with good moral character.*
- 3 *People do not automatically develop good moral character; therefore, conscientious efforts must be made to help young people develop the values and abilities necessary for moral decision making and conduct.*
- 4 *Effective character education is based on core ethical values which form the foundation of democratic society in particular, respect, responsibility, trustworthiness, caring, justice and fairness, and civic virtue and citizenship.*
- 5 *These core ethical values transcend cultural, religious and socio-economic differences.*
- 6 *Character education is, first and foremost, an obligation of families; it is also an important obligation of faith communities, schools, youth and other human service organizations.*
- 7 *These obligations to develop character are best achieved when these groups work in concert.*
8. *The character and conduct of our youth reflect the character and conduct of society; therefore, every adult has the responsibility to teach and model the core ethical values and every social institution has the responsibility to promote the development of good character.*

people and by advocates of different approaches to education reform. The arguments are compelling, and some documentation is provided here.

The Accelerated Schools Project, for example, is one of the leading efforts to restructure schools, led by Stanford University Professor Henry Levin. He emphasizes more challenging subject matter and enriched experiences. Some impacts on student discipline were in the Education Commission of the States Report, *Youth Violence*, based on a study of the Project's more than 700 elementary and middle schools.

- "Suspensions dropped more than 50 percent in a Massachusetts middle school after it embraced the accelerated schools philosophy.
- At a Missouri elementary school, referrals to the principal's office dropped from more than 90 a year to only 21.

- During its first three years as an accelerated school, a Texas elementary school saw incidents of vandalism decline by 78 percent.

- In the same time period a California elementary school showed a drop of 103 days of suspensions to 34 days, even though enrollment had increased by more than 100."

The Coalition for Essential Schools, a major school restructuring effort headed by Ted Sizer, is a similarly ambitious effort. There are examples of drops in suspensions, increases in attendance rates, and reductions in discipline referrals. Restructuring by a North Carolina school district resulted in a large reduction in the suspension of Black students.

In Kentucky, where sustained reforms have been underway, schools in Jefferson County with the longest period of restructuring had the greatest improvement in attendance, parental and student satisfaction, and parental involvement.

They also had the greatest decreases in suspensions and detentions.

This report has focused on the importance of improving order in the classroom to improve student achievement. A sustained effort to improve teaching and instruction will likely also result in reducing problem student behaviors and lead to higher achievement. It is expected that better teaching, better behavior, and higher achievement are intertwined.

SCHOOL UNIFORMS

School uniforms have been around for a long time, particularly in private and religious schools. But a lot of interest has developed in their use for public schools as well. Uniforms are often ubiquitous in other countries. Different discussions of this type of policy emphasize different advantages of uniforms. One is to remove the element of competition in wearing clothes — which sometimes reaches the point of students being robbed of expensive jackets and shoes.

Another is to create school spirit and identity. Yet another is increased discipline and achievement.

In the 1996-97 school year, three percent of all *public* schools required uniforms with a third of those implementing policies that year, according to the NCES survey.²⁰ Schools with 75 percent or more students eligible for school lunches, and with 50 percent or more minority enrollment, were more likely to require school uniforms than schools with less than 50 percent lunch-eligible and minority students.

In April of 1998, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, with funding from Land's End, conducted a survey in 10 states of elementary and middle school principals. They reported that more than a quarter of students in public elementary and secondary schools in those states attended public schools where uniforms are being worn (11 percent) or are under consideration (15 percent).

²⁰ NCES, *Violence and Discipline Problems in U.S. Public Schools: 1996-97*.

This is a quickly developing phenomenon, for about two-thirds of these uniform policies are new within the past two years. As shown in Table 9, the benefits were perceived by the principals in the areas of peer pressure, image in the community, classroom discipline, and school spirit.

While principals at schools without uniforms were less optimistic about what such policies would bring about, they were nevertheless generally positive in their expectations. Interestingly, parents were more likely than school boards and principals to initiate discussions about uniforms.²¹

In March of 1998, school uniforms took a big step forward in the Big Apple. The New York City Board of Education, for the first time in its 156 years, voted to require its half-million elementary school children to wear uniforms. This will commence by the spring of 1999. However, exemptions can be given to parents and schools. Said *The New York Times* in reporting the story,

*"...New York City...joins in a national trend in which public schools troubled by truancy and low achievement have turned to uniforms in an attempt to return discipline and a serious learning environment to their classrooms."*²²

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLING

New and tougher policies often lead to removal of students from the classroom, sometimes to outright suspension or expulsion, and sometimes to an alternative educational setting. There are, though, a variety of possibilities for education in an alternative setting, or temporary removal from the regular classroom.

- The most frequent solution may be the creation of a whole alternative school.
- There may be removal to alternative classrooms within the regular school. For example,

Table 9: Percentage of Principals Indicating Reported or Expected Positive Effects of Uniform Policies

Effects on:	Schools with Uniform Policies	Schools without Uniform Policies
Image in community	86%	65%
School spirit	81	61
Classroom discipline	80	64
Peer pressure	76	77
Student safety	75	46
Student achievement	52	45
Attendance	48	36

Source: National Association of Elementary School Principals and Land's End, *Principals Report on Extent and Impact of School Uniform Trend*, 1998.

in Fairfax County, Virginia, about 100 students are being taught in separate classrooms after getting at least five suspensions for unruly behavior. They may face restrictions on participation in extracurricular activities and be prohibited from wearing some types of clothes.²³

- In some northern Virginia schools, teachers can send students for a period of time to a designated "time out" classroom.

Unfortunately, we have only a few examples gleaned

mostly from reading the newspapers. There is no national tally of how many schools have adopted this approach, the level of resources available, or how many students are involved.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Efforts to teach students strategies for resolving conflicts have been underway in American schools since the early 1980s. From extensive research and writings, Diane Levin and Nancy Carlsson-Paige conclude:²⁴

²¹ National Association of Elementary Schools Principals and Land's End, *Principals Report on Extent and Impact of School Uniform Trend*, April 1998.

²² *New York Times*, March 19, 1998, p. 1.

²³ *Washington Post*, February 9, 1998.

²⁴ *Education Week*, June 3, 1998.

"When done well, they teach children a whole repertoire of nonviolent ways to deal with the problems they face in their social world and help counteract the lessons they learn from exposure to violence. The programs can help children feel a strong sense of themselves as skilled problem solvers empowered with the ability to transform conflicts.... Research on school conflict-resolution programs is beginning to show that they can have a positive impact, especially when begun with children at an early age."

The state of Illinois now *requires* districts to provide conflict resolution or violence prevention education for fourth- to twelfth-grade students. This led to the creation of the Illinois Council for the Prevention of Violence to help

schools provide such education. The 1995 Illinois Violence Prevention Act created an authority which will "plan, coordinate, fund and evaluate local and statewide violence prevention efforts." Money for it is raised by selling specially designed license plates.²⁵

Minnesota also allocates funds for violence prevention legislation, and its Office of Community Collaboration issued a guide to help the schools in the effort.²⁶

The Dayton, Ohio Positive Adolescents Choices Training Program (PACT) uses African American youth role models to give African American youth the skills to solve interpersonal problems. A study by the General Accounting Office found that "PACT participants had less involvement in fighting and fewer referrals to juvenile court in comparisons to a control group that did not receive training."²⁷

The New York City Board of Education, in collaboration with Educators for Social Responsibility, has had a program since 1985 to provide students with conflict resolution skills.²⁸ A recent NCES survey reports that four in five schools have some kind of violence prevention program.

SCHOOL LEVEL SECURITY MEASURES IN 1996-97²⁹

Almost all schools required visitors to sign in (96 percent) in 1996-97. Four in five schools had a "closed campus" policy in which most students could not leave the school grounds for lunch (more likely in middle schools). Over half of schools controlled access to the school building, large- and medium-sized schools were more likely to than small schools, and controlled access was most prevalent in the Northeast. One-fourth of schools

controlled access to the school grounds.

Just one percent of schools put students through metal detectors daily, and four percent subjected students to random metal detector checks. Six percent of schools had law enforcement personnel stationed 30 hours or more at the school and 4 percent for between one and 29 hours. Having such personnel in schools was rare in elementary schools.

The National Center for Education Statistics has developed an index of the stringency of security measures in place in the 1996-97 school year in public schools, based on the presence of guards, metal detectors, and controlled access to school buildings. The results are shown in Table 10.

Finally, four out of five schools (78 percent) reported having some kind of violence prevention program. Of those schools with programs,

²⁵ *Youth Violence: A Policymakers Guide*, Education Commission of the States, March 1996.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Data in this section are from *Violence and Discipline Problems in U.S. Public Schools: 1996-97*.

Table 10: Stringency of Security among Public Schools, 1996-97

Stringency of Security	Percent of Public Schools
Stringent	2%
Moderate	11
Low	84
None	3
Source: NCES, 1998	

some kind of curriculum (89 percent), counseling/social work efforts (87 percent) or review or revision of school-wide disciplinary policies (85 percent) were the most prevalent.

* * *

The above summary does not cover all recent types of efforts to reduce disruptive behavior. However, it does provide examples of those given the most publicity during recent years. School systems and communities will continue to look for ways to deal with the problem. They will continue to be inventive, searching for what works in the circumstances they

encounter. Unfortunately, however, there is only limited information about both the prevalence and effectiveness of these program approaches. While school violence has risen in the public perception as a major worry and concern, that concern is not being matched by investment in surveys of what is being done in response, and in rigorous evaluations of those approaches.

CONCLUSION

The data presented in this report show that school discipline is everybody's problem. Schools from east to west; north to south; schools in cities, suburbs, and rural areas; and schools serving students from all racial/ethnic backgrounds — all experience major problems with student behavior.

Moreover, the issue of school disorder is more than a security and safety problem — it is a critical factor in student academic achievement. Without order in our classrooms, teachers can't teach and students can't learn.

On the positive side, some things that schools have traditionally done seem to help. One very practical solution — invoking student disciplinary policies — was found in this report to be related to lower levels of student misbehavior.

Another conventional solution, controlling students' movements during the school day by requiring passes and other measures, also seems to help at least to reduce the levels of "nonserious" school offenses.

These findings suggest that many schools experiencing high levels of disorder can remedy the situation somewhat by getting tougher on students.

Yet, as the report also reveals, a diversity of innovative disciplinary practices are being tested. These range from violence prevention programs to the establishment of alternative schools. Some of these policies and practices will help maintain order in the classroom, while others may not.

As yet, the empirical evidence for the effectiveness of these innovative approaches is extremely limited. To gauge the effectiveness of these policies and practices, data must be collected, similar in scope to the data collected regarding conventional disciplinary policies. Only with new data will it be possible to supplement existing policies with more preventive measures that are likely to be effective.

APPENDIX A: TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Data were drawn from NELS:88. It consists of a nationally representative, clustered, stratified sample of students and schools. In the first wave, approximately 1,000 middle schools were selected and an average of 24 eighth-graders were randomly selected from each school. Students were resurveyed in the tenth and twelfth grades. Achievement and background data were obtained from these surveys of students. In addition, principals of the schools attended by these students were surveyed about school policies and practices, including discipline. One principal was surveyed for each student, although when multiple students were in the same schools the principal was surveyed only once. Of the 25,000 students sampled in the first wave, only those who had participated in all three waves of the study and had attended the same high school in tenth and twelfth grades were included, for a total of 13,626 cases. Data were weighted using the weight provided by the database for students participating in all three waves of the study, to account for unequal probabilities of selection and student non-re-

sponse. This weight was divided by its mean to preserve the unweighted degrees of freedom.

Variables were selected to measure student delinquency, academic achievement, school policies, and student background characteristics at various time points. For descriptive analyses, the prevalence of student delinquent behavior was measured from the responses of tenth-graders to questions asking them if they participated in various delinquent behaviors; student attitudes toward delinquent behavior were measured from the responses of tenth-graders to questions asking if they approved of various delinquent behaviors; school punishments were measured from the response of school principals to questions asking them how they punished various rule infractions; and other school disciplinary policies were measured from the response of school principals to questions asking them if there were any given policies in place. All percentages referred to the percentage of students rather than the percentage of schools. For multivariate

analyses, student delinquency was measured with the items from the descriptive analyses, but for both tenth and twelfth grades, and by tenth- and twelfth-graders' responses to items asking them how often they used drugs and alcohol; academic achievement was measured from Item Response Theory scores of eighth- and twelfth-graders on assessments in mathematics, science, reading, and social science; student background characteristics were measured from responses by eighth-graders to questions on their ethnicity and gender, as well as a summated scale of items that indicated their socioeconomic status; and school policies were measured as in the descriptive analyses.

Analyses were conducted in three steps. First, descriptive analyses of the prevalence of student delinquency and school policies were conducted. Second, measurement models were developed. Student delinquency in twelfth grade was divided into three factors through an exploratory factor analyses of 11 items; loadings were produced using a cutoff of an eigenvalue

of 1 and oblimin rotation. School punishment severity was measured through a summated scale of severity of the modal punishment for each of the offenses listed in the descriptive analyses. Security was measured through a summated scale of the security measures listed in the descriptive analyses. Tenth-grade delinquency was measured through a summated scale of the behaviors listed in the descriptive analyses. The reliability of these scales was measured through Cronbach alphas, with a .7 cutoff point. Achievement was translated into change scores by calculating the difference between eighth- and twelfth-grade scores in each subject area. Third, measurement models and other items were incorporated into the regression analyses. Each of the three twelfth-grade delinquency factors was regressed on the punishment severity scale, the security scale, the tenth-grade delinquency scale, the SES index, ethnicity, gender, and school policies on uniforms, gangs, and the enrollment level in the school. Then each of the four achievement measures

was regressed on the twelfth-grade delinquency factors and the other independent variables.

In addition, the four achievement measures were regressed on 11 independent variables except the twelfth-grade delinquency factors. All regression analyses were conducted separately for public, private, urban, and nonurban schools.

It should be noted that the findings of regression analyses of achievement on the independent variables, but excluding the twelfth-grade delinquency factors, indicate that the delinquency factors mediate between disciplinary policy and academic achievement. Policy is related to achievement when twelfth-grade delinquency is not taken into account, but when it is, the impact of policy is reduced or eliminated. Since policy is related to delinquency, this finding suggests an indirect relationship in which punishment severity and security measures are related to delinquency levels which, in turn, are related to academic achievement.

Appendix B: Factor Loadings			
Item	Factor	Non-serious Factor	Serious Factor
number times had 5 or more drinks in a row	.630	.403	.165
number times used marijuana, last 12 months	.773	.377	.176
number times used cocaine, last 12 months	.757	-.022	.251
number times late for school	.084	.411	.461
number times cut/skip class	.171	.740	.124
number times got in trouble	.324	.740	.213
number times got into physical fight	.257	.673	.497
number times put on in-school suspension	.101	.402	.710
number times transferred for disciplinary reasons	.204	.009	.765
number times arrested	.347	.089	.762
N=13,626 Source: Wenglinsky, unpublished tabulations derived from NELS:88			

Appendix C: Regression Coefficients: Delinquency Models			
	Drug Offenses	Non-serious Offenses	Serious Offenses
School policies			
Punishment severity	-.028*	-.027*	-.027*
Security	-.017	-.047*	.014
School uniforms	-.002	.002	.005
Gang ban	-.010	.027*	-.007
School size	.007	.085*	-.004
Student characteristics			
SES	.015	.025*	-.058*
Prior delinquency	.385*	.486*	.195*
Minority	-.084*	.032*	.010
Male	.064*	.118*	.133*
R-Square	.166	.279	.066
N=13,626 *p<.05 Source: Wenglinsky, unpublished tabulations derived from NELS:88			

Appendix D: Regression Coefficients: Achievement Models				
Variable	Mathematics Achievement	Reading Achievement	Social Science Achievement	Science Achievement
Drug offenses	-.034*	-.102	-.003	-.038*
Nonserious offense	-.069*	-.050*	-.048*	-.064*
Serious offense	-.067*	-.029*	-.060*	-.055*
Punishment severity	-.008	.015	.014	.018
Security	-.026*	-.024*	-.043*	-.022
School uniforms	.042*	.017	.025*	.005
Gang ban	-.002	.003	-.018	-.022
School size	.056*	.064*	.047*	.045*
SES	-.117*	.026*	.079*	.120*
Prior delinquency	-.112*	-.032*	-.049*	-.029*
Minority	-.033*	-.042*	-.014	-.104*
Male	.111*	.018	.042*	.144*
R-square	.070	.028	.027	.069
<p>*p<.05 N=13,626 Source: Wenglinsky, unpublished tabulations derived from NELS:88</p>				